# The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

**Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea**

Founded by EDWARD C. HEGELER

VOL. XXXIX (No. 1) JANUARY, 1925 (No. 824)

CONTENTS



**The Open Court Publishing Company**

**122 S. Michigan Ave. Chicago, Illinois**

**Per copy, 20 cents (1 shilling). Yearly, $2.00 (in the U.P.U., 9s. 6d.)**

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*Frontispiece to The Open Court.*

THE CHRISTIAN HEAVENLY HIERARCHY

Reproduction of Painting by Luca, Royal Academy at Florence

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## THE ATTENDANTS OF YAHVEH

BY H. M. SELBY

FROM the time of the Captivity onwards, Jewish angelology became much more elaborated than in the earlier periods, until at last a hierarchy of angels was established as an article of belief.

In Christianity the belief in the hierarchy persisted, though with alterations and varieties of conception. Finally, the arrangement of the so-called Dionysius, the Areopagiti, was generally adopted, except that a hot controversy raged in the middle ages as to the relative positions of the Cherubim and Seraphim, which eventually became a dispute as to the comparative value of knowledge and love.

In the arrangement of Dionysius, the angels fall into three groups, with three orders in each group, thus:

| Group I | Group II | Group III |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Seraphim | 4. Dominations | 7. Principalities |
| 2. Cherubim | 5. Virtues | 8. Archangels |
| 3. Thrones | 6. Powers | 9. Angels |

These three groups may be described respectively as:

I. Attendants on the Deity.
II. Incorporeal Essences.
III. Guardians (of nations or individuals).

Each group marks a stage in the development of Jewish conceptions. Group I belongs to Hebrew mythology before the Captivity; Group III to Judaism after the Captivity, when the Jews had come under the Babylonian and Persian influence; Group II to Judaism after contact with the Greeks and the introduction of philosophical thought. It is Group I that forms the subject of this article, more especially the Cherubim and Seraphim, which seem to have been

the oldest conception in Yahvistic religion of what we now call collectively "angels," i. e., of beings intermediate between the divine and the human.[1]

In some authors we find other orders named. Most of these as we shall see, are merely conceptions derived from that of the Cher-

SAINTS ASCENDING TO HEAVEN
(Reproduced from Photograph of a Painting at Donaneschingen)

ubim and Seraphim, but there is one order that stands by itself, viz: the *Watchers* or *Sons of God* (see Genesis vi and Job i) which probably belong to the Pre-Yahvistic period, though we meet with them chiefly in later Jewish literature. These would certainly fall into Group I if they were mentioned by Dionysius.[2]

[1] It may be noted that, in the Old Testament the term "angel" is not applied to the Cherubim and Seraphim.

[2] It is, of course, generally known that the "angel of Yahveh" mentioned in the Old Testament, is not what we mean by an "angel" but a theophany or manifestation of the Deity.

HEAVENLY MOTHERHOOD
Symbolized by the Moon

(Reproduction from Painting by Bresica, Gallery of Milan)

It is easy to see how the conception arose of the members of Group I. As Yahveh was conceived after the pattern of an oriental monarch, he was naturally supposed to have a great train of attendants. Some of these may perhaps have been inferior deities at an earlier stage of Hebrew Theism.

Of the Cherubim we hear in the Old Testament much more than of the Seraphim who are only mentioned once *by name.* (Isaiah vi.17.)

It was Cherubim that guarded Eden (see Genesis iii.11) though, in spite of the incorrect form "Cherubims," used in the Authorized Version, the Garden is generally described as guarded by one angel only. Nothing could be more different from the modern idea of a Cherub—a small creature, with only head, wings and hands—as represented in such pictures as Raphael's "Madonna di San Sisto," and the Cherubim as originally conceived. We have no description of them in the Bible, very naturally, as their forms would be familiar to the Jews, for they were represented on the covering of the ark and there were images of them in the Temple, but—judging by allusions to them—they must have been large. They probably resembled the figures with animal heads which we see in Assyrian sculpture.

By comparing two passages of Ezekiel, we gather that the Cherubim had the head of a bull or calf. In Ezekiel i.10, we find a description of four "living creatures" each of which has four faces—one of a man, one of a lion, one of an ox, and one of an eagle. In Chapter x of the same book there is a similar passage, but here instead of "the face of an ox," we find "the face of the cherub"; which seems to indicate that the Cherub was ox-faced.

One office of Cherubim seems to have been personal attendance on Yahveh. In Psalms xviii.10, we read of Yahveh: "He rode upon a cherub and did fly," and in another Psalm (lxviii.17) we read that the Cherubim formed the divine chariot.[3] Probably they made a throne for Yahveh with their wings, for we read that the sculptured Cherubim "spread out their wings on high covering the mercy-seat," where we are told "the glory of Yahveh" appeared (see Exodus xxv.20, 21; Kings viii.7). Yahveh is also described as sitting between the Cherubim (Psalms xcix.1).

[3] It is true that, in the second passage, in our Revised Version, angels are not mentioned, only "thousands upon thousands," but we may conclude that angels are meant. At any rate there is no doubt that the chariot was conceived as formed of angels, for Ezekiel i and x speaks of wheels which accompanied the living creatures.

The Seraphim, in shape, were serpents or dragons. In the Slavonic Enoch, the term *drakontes*[4] is applied to them. The name "Seraph" is derived from Hebrew *sarapu* "to burn," so the Seraphim were probably conceived as fire-breathing.

I said that the Seraphim were only mentioned once *by name* in the Old Testament, but there is probably a reference to them in the passage of Genesis which I have already mentioned with regard to the Cherubim. This passage is generally interpreted as asserting that the Garden of Eden was guarded by an angel *with* a flaming sword, but the actual words are "Cherubim *and* a flaming sword" and the flaming sword is supposed to denote one of the fiery Seraphim, which, in later literature, are always associated with the Cherubim.

More uncertain, but not altogether untenable, are Canon Cheyne's description of the brazen serpent as "a bronze seraph," and the theory that the serpent that tempted Eve was a seraph—perhaps appointed to guard the tree, as Lador guarded the golden apples in the Garden of Hesperides. In favor of the lattery theory is the fact that, in mythology and folklore serpents often figure as guardians of trees. If we accept this view of the tempter, we must regard the seraphim as standing upright, since we are told, in Genesis iii.14, that the serpent was condemned to creeping as a punishment for bringing about the Fall of Man.

The *Thrones,* which, in the classification of Dionysius, are grouped with the Cherubim and Seraphim, must be the angels who, in Ezekiel are described as forming the throne of Yahveh.

In some Jewish books, we read also of *Wheels* (*Ophannim*), a term which probably denotes the angels, described in the same passage, as forming the wheels of the divine chariot. Thus we find three separate classes of angels in later books (Cherubim, Thrones, Wheels), whereas Ezekiel represents three groups of one class, each performing a different function.

In later Jewish books, we also hear of "living creatures." Where this name occurs, it probably denotes beings with heads of any kinds of animals, whereas the term, "Cherubim" denotes ox-headed beings only. The "four beasts" of the New Testament "Book of Revelation" (A. V.) are *hayyoth.*

It cannot fail to occur to us as we read of these various mythological beings—neither divine nor human—that such conceptions bear a close resemblance to the Gorgons Jinn (Genii) and other

[4] Greek δρακοντες, "serpents" or "dragons."

beings which figure in various mythologies; in fact, in the passage of the *Slavonic Enoch*, quoted above, the Cherubim and Seraphim are grouped with various other beings, some of which are derived from Greek mythology.

This being so, the question occurs to us whether as the Greek conception of beings of this sort probably arose out of natural objects or phenomena, the Jewish conceptions may not have had a similar origin and we feel inclined to accept the theory of Dr. A. Smythe Palmer that the Cherubim are a personification of the winds, the Seraphim of the lightning.[5] Certainly no one can read such passages as Psalm xviii.9, without thinking of the winds borne along by the breeze. This idea is also in harmony with the fact that Yahveh has all the characteristics of a sky-god, being associated with clouds, thunder, lightning, etc., and is described as having his abode in heaven, so that we should naturally expect his attendants to be personifications of atmospheric phenomena.

One remark, in conclusion, with regard to the hierarchy of angels. It is worth noting that, though all the angels have been adopted into Christian theology, yet, while, in Judaism the angels who lived for the glory of God are most prominent in Christianity, more attention is paid to those who minister to human needs—a characteristic difference since the keynote of Judaism is worship of God, the keynote of Christianity of God's care of man.

The slight hold that Group II, in the classification of Dionysius, has obtained in general belief arises partly from the nebulous presentment of these conceptions in Alexandrian writers, but it is also an indication of the indifference of both Judaism and Christianity to the realm of ideas apart from personalities. It is needless to contrast this indifference with the Idealism of Greek thought.

[5] See the *Nineteenth Century and After, February*, 1900, and October, 1909.

# "HE WHO GETS SLAPPED"

## FROM THE CULTURALIST VIEWPOINT

BY WILLIAM NATHANSON

> ZINIDA: Everybody does what he wants. It's Consuelo's business and her father's.
>
> PAPA BRIQUET: No, mother, that's not true! Not everybody does what he wants, but it turns out this way. . . . Devil knows why!
>
> —From *He Who Gets Slapped.*

WHY "it turns out this way," instead of the other way; why and how human activity takes on one form instead of another, in other words, who and what determines the activity of human beings; who directs and controls human destinies; who guides human fate? This problem of all human problems has vexed the strongest minds of the thinking part of the world.

This problem is known in philosophy as the problem of Determinism. And this problem resolves itself into two questions: The first question is: "Is the activity of the human being determined and controlled or does the human being possess a freedom of will? Or, as the modern philosophers call it, A Will to be Free?" But since no matter how much freedom of will or will to be free we will allow to the individual, there will still remain a great deal of human effort and human activity which must be considered predetermined. For the individual in particular, and mankind in general, not only creates the future, but also carries within itself the entire past of the world, or to state it more correctly, is carried by the stream of the universal past. Consequently, there is the second question: "Who or what determines the efforts and strivings, achievements and accomplishments of human individuals and of human society; who and what guides, controls, directs and determines the activity, destiny and fate of mankind?"

And the answer to this question depends upon a larger question upon a great metaphysical problem, known as the problem of Being. This is the problem that relates to the essence of the universe, to the ultimate universal reality, to that ultimate source, from which the entire world, as we perceive it with our senses, sprouts out. They who conceive that the essence of the world is matter, and that our willing, feeling and thinking is ultimately caused by material substance, they who can picture to themselves the possibility of something that possesses neither life nor spirit to produce life as well as spirit, they must consider the material forces in the world to be determining and predetermining factors of human activity. Those on the other hand who see deeper into the problem of being and existence, and who, because of that, cannot conceive of the possibility that blind and will-less matter could be the cause of human efforts, strivings, ideals, aims and purposes, they on the other hand must hold that a universal, spiritual existence of some kind guides and determines in one way or another every movement of the world at large, as well as the activities of mankind in particular. Since from their point of view, life and spirit can under no condition be reduced to physical, chemical or economical and all other material forces cannot account for the directions that life and spirit take.

Human life, therefore, in all its manifestations is rather considered by them as the result of the attitude between the human being as such and the universal Being which is identical with Universal Spirituality.

And since these mutual attitudes express themselves, as far as we can tell, through the creations of human being which are incorporated in science, philosophy, art and religion, which all taken together go under the name of Culture, it is Culture in its broadest and deepest meaning that can be considered as the determining factor of the life of the Individual, Society and Nation.

We are, or have been until now, generally speaking, triangular beings, that is, beings who see things in a three-fold manner. Perhaps because of the same unknown reason, the stream of Culture is divided in three main currents.

Mr. Uspensky, the new, great Russian philosopher, in his book called *Tertium Organum* brings out the idea that we see space three-dimensionally, because our psychical being is three-sidedly constituted. And if we begin now to think of a fourth dimension, it is probably because in addition to our sensation, perception and conception, the faculty of intuition is beginning to be added.

Just as we have three dimensions of space, three main streams of individual psychic life and three main divisions of life in general, such as vegetable, animal and human life (superhuman life may come in time), so we also have three main currents of culture, namely, metaphysical, aesthetical and ethical.

Every individual of course, has every one of these currents running through him. There is hardly an individual that is not at some period or at some moment of his life, metaphysical. There is no individual that is not more or less motivated by aesthetic impulses, and even the most bestial individual has some smack of morality within him. At the same time, however, we can point to individuals that are more metaphysical than others, and to others who are essentially lovers of beauty, and still others who are truly ethical in their nature.

As with individuals, so with Nations. The three streams of Culture that we have enumerated run through each and every nation in the world. There is, however, a difference between one nation and another as to the intensity with which the characteristic stream runs through it.

There are nations in which, for reasons that we cannot account for, the metaphysical stream has become predominant. Others have distinguished themselves because of the great intensity of the aesthetic cultural stream, which expressed itself through them. And the third type of nation would be the moral type, that is the nation which was chosen to be the strongest conductor of the moral attribute of the Universal Self. The German nation could be taken as an illustration of the metaphysical type, the French as an illustration of the aesthethic type, and the Russian as an illustration of the moral type.

Of all the expressions of Culture, the Russian nation has laid the greatest emphasis on the moral principle. All the creations of the Russian mind are tinged deeper than the creations of any other nation with morality. And of all the elements that constitute morality, such as love, humility, reverence and justice, the Russian nation has laid stress more than any nation in the world on the elements of love and humility. Every line in the writings of the two greatest Russian thinkers, Tolstoi and Dostoyevsky, is saturated with love and humility. From the point of view of Tolstoi and Dostoyevsky, love and humility are the shortest roads to Universal Reality.

Raskolnikov, the hero of Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, murders an old woman, who, from all logical standpoints, is good

for nothing. But the moment the murder is committed, something, of which logic seems to know nothing about tells Raskolnikov, "You are a murderer, you have committed a crime." The world around him knows nothing of it. He succeeds in his efforts to delude everybody. But he cannot find a place for himself in this big world. He knows of no way to save himself, of how to get back his quietude of soul until he comes to the simple, unsophisticated girl, Sonia, who is full of love and steeped in the spirit of humiliation. And it is this girl who points to him the way of salvation. She tells him to go out on the street and to fall on his knees and in the spirit of greatest humbleness, and deepest humiliation, confess before every passerby his crime.

It is this moral culture that has found its strongest expression in the Russian nation, that explains the views of the relationship of individuals to each other and of mankind at large, to the Universal Self.

Morality does not, like metaphysics, merely speculate about the source, origin and essence of the world, neither does it merely admire and appreciate the world around as aesthetics does. Morality is the most subjective and intimate feeling of a concrete relationship between one self and another; it is a synthetic feeling of love, reverence, pity, humility and justice, that expresses itself in the relationship between one self and the other—a relationship that must eventually extend not only between man and man individually, socially and nationally, but also between the human self and the Universal Self.

It is this concreteness in the relationship between human self and Universal Self that characterizes the Russian. It is because of this concreteness that the Russian has become known as the mystic par-excellence. For mysticism after all, means nothing more than a sensing of a concrete relationship between the individual "I" and a spirituality that fills each and every nook and corner of the world that surrounds the "I". It is this sensing of the invisible threads that run uninterruptedly and web themselves constantly between the human and the superhuman, between the natural and the supernatural, that fills the heart and soul of the simple, uncivilized and illiterate Russian peasant. And it is the characteristic of the Russian peasantry as a whole that reflects itself in the works of Tolstoi, Dostoyevsky and Andreyev.

And to the extent that the newer tendencies in modern thought tend to emphasize more and more the importance of feeling and

willing instead of thinking in the role and function of human life; to the extent that intuition is beginning to play the predominant role in determining human thought; to the extent that the thinking world today is following more and more in the footsteps of Rousseau, Shopenhauer and Nietzche, rather than in the footsteps of Kant, Hegel and Fichte; to the extent that intellectualism is being more and more supplanted through the efforts of the great philosopher Henri Bergson, by intuitionism, to that extent are the creations of the Russian mind beginning to attract the entire world. Tolstoi has long been what Gorki calls "the sounding bell of the world." And Dostoyevsky, who only a few years ago was hardly known to the world at large, is now becoming the psychical x-ray of the world, the great spiritual searchlight that sees through the crude materialism, that up to recently prevailed, to the essential reality lying beyond it.

The great German critic, Herman Hesse, tells us that the German students today are more fascinated by Dostoyevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*, than by Goethe's *Faust;* and he is not satisfied to speak of him as an artist and thinker, but he wants him to be placed forever among the great world prophets.

As long as science hoped to prove to the world the possibility of analyzing life and spirit into its minutest constituents and thus to reduce it to the same elements that physics and chemistry deals with, there was no room for such works as those of Dostoyevsky, to whom life and spirit are irreducable entities and to whom spirit is more real and substantial than matter, and who has seen and felt in the most concrete way possible a distinct relationship between the Universal Spirit and the human self—a relationship without which, he thought, life has no meaning and morality—neither a basis or a purpose.

Today, science has abandoned its hope of finding the secrets and causes of life in the crucibles of the chemical laboratory, and it has acknowledged that we know no more today than we knew before about the essence of life.

Intellect has now been taken down from its high pedestal and more prominence is given to feeling and to that mystic consciousness which seems to be a synthesis of instinct, feeling and intuition.

As this mystical consciousness gains ground in the thinking world over the intellectual consciousness our subconscious will be more and more looked upon as the source of our logical thought and as the connecting link between human consciousness and Universal

Consciousness, and as a consequence of this, the Russian moral and mystical culture will win the sympathy and appreciation of the world at large.

It is only in the light of the Russian culture as we have here analyzed it and in the light of the newer tendencies in modern cultrue at large, that a work like Andreyev's *He Who Gets Slapped* can be thoroughly grasped and understood.

One may pick the world apart, pick it to its last shread of matter, but it is precisely here that life—that inexplicable, unanalyzable, intangible roots of matter—begins and the scalpel must abdicate in favor of the imagination, the winged intelligence.

My vision! Who can take that from me? My impassioned dream that burst my brains—dikes and overflows on to canvas, that forced the marble block to yield its curved secrets, or that flashed on paper as a rhapsody—that is the *Real* moment, over against which the seething caldron of mutilations we call "the great world" has only that validity for being that a fertilizer has.—From de Casseras' *Chamelion.*

"He" (to Consuelo): Can you hear the sun, singing. Like the strings of a divine heart spreads the golden rays. Do you not see the hand of God, which gives harmony, light and love to the world? Do not the mountains in the blue cloud of incense sing their hymn of glory? Remember, Oh Consuelo, remember the prayer of the mountains, the prayer of the sea.

Counselo (a little later to "He"): This morning when I went without breakfast I became so sad, so disgusted and I thought: If God should come and give me something to eat! And as I thought it, I suddenly heard, honestly, it's true, I heard: Counsuelo, somebody's calling you.

"He" (to Consuelo as both are dying): No, it is the sea and the sun. . . . What a sun! Don't you feel that you are the foam, white sea foam and you are flying to the sun? You feel light, you have nobody, you are flying higher, my love!

I am flying. I am the sea foam, and this is the sun, it shines . . . so strong . . . I feel well. (To the Baron, uttering his last words) And you want to be ahead of me even *there?* No! I am coming. We shall prove then whose she is to be forever. . . .—From *He Who Gets Slapped.*

Who is "He"?

"He," as we learn from the conversation between him and the gentleman, is a man of very deep insight into the essence of things. He sees and understands more than the people around him, even more than those of his own circle. He tells us that as a young boy he would dream of clowns at the time when his fellowstudents were thinking of Plutarch's heroes, and of the light of science. He has

before everybody else, it seems, realized that if the world is in its ultimate reality really no more than what science in the middle of the nineteenth century had taken it to be, if the roots of life and spirit are capable of being analyzed and reduced in one form or another to blind will-less and lifeless substantiality, if those roots are not, as De Casseras takes them to be, inexplicable, unanalyzable and intangible, if the scalpel is to kill our imagination instead of abdicating in its favor—then human life is nothing but mockery, and our roles and functions are only those of clowns.

But these heavy abstractions as he himself calls them were as little understood by the people around him as were, for instance, the abstractions, or rather the deep visions of Dostoyevsky at that time when he lived and worked.

And there came a perfect gentleman, of the type sometimes met, and robbed "He" of his thoughts, vulgarized them and brought them in an easily digestible form to the people, and thereby became the author of a so-called great book and reaped the glory and fame that justly belonged to somebody else. Not only does this gentleman rob him of his thoughts, but he also succeeds in taking away from him his wife whom he loved and by whom he was loved and adored.

He is left alone in this great world; nobody to love him, nobody to respect and acknowledge him. Wherever he turns he sees his thoughts, the children of his mind, who do not recognize him as their father any more than his wife recognizes him as her husband. The gentleman is the recognized father of his spiritual children and the acknowledged husband of his flesh and blood wife.

And how does "He" resist the assaults of the gentleman? He resists it through non-resistance. He humiliates himself, he completely annihilates his ego and thus he expects to take revenge from his enemy—the gentleman. "He," one through whom the moral culture has in the most intense way expressed itself, feels that there is an absolute justice in the world, and that therefore, sooner or later, in one way or in another, the one who has committed an injustice will be punished, and that he can therefore afford to resist in a passive manner all the injustices heaped upon him.

At the same time, "He" gets a deeper realization of the worthlessness of our temporal life, that brings back to him the clown-dreams of his youth—the dreams of those who can at liberty mock at everything and everybody.

"He" disappears and the "gentleman" as well as the world around him believe that he is dead, while "He" busies himself in the

circus to play the role of a clown, and thus fulfills the dream and realizes the ideals of his youth.

When he is asked by the manager of the circus for his name, he tells them: "What difference does it make to you? When a stray dog comes to you, you don't ask for his name, you give him another name. Let 'He' be that dog."

He wants to reach the lowest depths of humiliation, so as to make the vengeance stronger. And at the same time he feels that the least there will be left of that ego that plays such an important role in the world he has left behind him, as he entered the circus, the more possible it will be for him to give the fullest and completest expression to his *self*. And when the question arises as to what his role should consist of as a clown, in the circus, he chooses, after only a few minutes of consideration, the role of one who gets slapped.

When he gets the first slap, he still feels the humiliation of it. He feels his cheek burning though the slap did not hurt. The other slaps make no impression on him whatsoever. His ego is killed and buried at least for a while, and his self is free. This world which means so much to each and every individual, means nothing to him. He can laugh and mock at it.

And when the "gentleman," after exerting great efforts to find "He," whom he somehow suspected of being alive, finally found him by accident in the circus, he told "He," "You wanted to take vengeance upon me through your humbleness." And when he asks "He" what was his idea of choosing a circus for that purpose, "He," in answer to this question, grimaces his face, thumbs his nose and says, "This is my idea."

At the moment that he enters the circus the great world tragedy folds and unrolls before us.

What is the central world tragedy? It is after all nothing but the conflict between the beast and the superman in the breast of man. It is the struggle between the god attribute and animal attribute in one and the same individual.

The more he succeeded in ignoring all the values that the temporal world offered him, the greater was his independence from the external world; the more he subdued his ego, the more room there was in him for the exercise of the god attribute in him, and the more possible did it become for him to feel intuitively the invisible threads that run between the human self and the Universal Self.

It is this feeling, this consciousness of the self that lies deep in the soul of man, that "He" brought with him into the circus and

infected everybody there with it. Everybody who came in contact with "He" felt his great spiritual power and became inspired and filled with an indescribable awe and reverence for him. The career maker and the money maker feared him. No wonder that Jackson, the career maker, told him that it would have been better if "He" hadn't come to the circus at all, and Papa Briquet regretted that he has ever had any dealings with "He." Others in the circus, especially those in whom the spiritual forces were still at the state where an awakening was possible, revered him and respected him.

Zinida, the lion tamer, asked "He" before the latter had a chance to pronounce a half dozen words, to tell her why it was that the man who took care of the cages, who was a very simple and unpretentious fellow, came in and out of the cages, without being afraid of the animals or the animals being afraid of him, while the same animals feared her.

And after a few conversations with Consuelo, the young girl, the incarnation of simplicity itself, began to hear the voices of God. And even the career maker himself, Mr. Jackson, gained such respect for Providence, that he would not allow "He" to say a word against the Almighty.

There is, however, one thing that "He" had not succeeded in leaving behind, as he soon found out, and that is Love, in all its manifestations. "He" began to feel an overflow of love in his heart the moment he saw Counsuelo.

The strong attachment that grew up between Consuelo and "He" raises an important question. Why does this simple, uncivilized, not exceptionally beautiful girl call out such an intense and extraordinary love from every one who met her? Even the baron, called by "He" the great defiler of love, experienced love feelings towards her that were different from the feelings that hundreds of other girls he had dealings with called forth in him.

The girl Counsuelo succeeded in doing that because she possessed an exceptional soul—a soul that had an inexhaustible supply of love in it. And it is because the Russian attributes such great importance to love that Consuelo became a figure in Andreyev's drama.

Consuelo really loved as very few can, and perhaps as nobody in actual life has ever yet loved. She loved not only her friends, but also her enemies. She knew, or rather felt that Zinida loved Bezano, whom she herself loved very passionately, though unconsciously. She felt the rage of hatred in Zinida's heart toward her,

but still she loved her, pitied her and was willing to help her in every way possible. Her heart really could embrace the entire world and still have room left. She practiced what Tolstoi taught. Tolstoi felt deeply in his heart and soul the impossibility of loving one who hated you and who committed constant injustice against you, but he saw and felt that love, absolute love, that is to say a love that would be all inclusive, is the road to the ultimate reality, the best means of reaching the world's end, which is the Universal Self, and because of that it is also the only road to man's happiness and blessedness. Tolstoi came to the conclusion that the salvation of man lies in love, in absolute love of his fellow men and if man as we know him today cannot attain this ideal, the man to come—the Superman—will.

Consuelo knew nothing of Tolstoi's teaching, but she was endowed with a soul full of innocence and love—love for everybody who had a human countenance, and it was her innocence and her inexhaustible love that attracted everybody who came in contact with her.

Zinida loved too, but what a different love it was! It is likely that Zinida's love is brought in, in this drama by Andreyev just to contrast it with the love of Consuelo, and thus emphasize more the moral quality, the ethical tone of Consuelo's love. Zinida loved Bezano, but it was a love that knew only of aesthetics, nothing of ethics. It was a love which is abhorent to the Russian temperament. The Russian knows and feels very well that there is, there must be, and there will be an aesthetic element in every love between man and woman, but the Russian cannot stand the elimination of the ethical element in any relationship between human beings created in God's image. He cannot bear the idea of sacrificing ethics on the altar of aesthetics. And Andreyev therefore made Zinida not only thirst and crave for the love of Bezano, but when that love was not to be gotten, any love would do, even that of animals. Zinida risked her life in order to get a kind attitude, a loving glance from her lions.

But more than anywhere else is this peculiar and specific Russian love, the love that is saturated with morality, brought out in the relation between "He" and Consuelo.

He loved Consuelo as only a man can love a woman, but at the same time he felt that in Consuelo's soul, deep in the recesses of the sub-conscious strata of her soul, there brewed a great deal of love for the young handsome Bezano, and that Bezano loved her in

return and that they both would make, as far as human reason can tell, a splendid match. And "He" did not hesitate for one moment to help bring about the aesthetically commendable and morally unobjectionable union of the two. He frequently told them that they reminded him of Adam and Eve. And when it became a question of saving Consuelo from the hands of the "defiler of love," the baron, he begged Bezano to take Consuelo and to run away with her, and if there was no way of escape, he advised him to kill the baron.

Bezano gave him a characteristic Russian answer to his advice of killing the baron. The answer was put in the form of a question: "And who will kill the others to come?"

This question truly reflects the Russian spirit of passive resistance.

The question seemed to sink deeply into the soul of "He." He takes it upon himself to save Consuelo from the baron and he saves her also in a typical Russian way. He did not kill the Baron, but he killed the one whom he loved and admired, he killed the innocent and lovable Consuelo and himself. He divides between her and himself the drink into which he put the poison. He resisted the Baron again through a passive non-resistance. He killed forever hers and his ego. He annihilated his and her earthly existence because his Russian mystic consciousness had created in him an intuition of a positive heavenly existence into which ourselves come in after our egos have been destroyed.

And isn't "He" justified in believing in the existence in a world of Selves that is different from the world that is known to us as temporal beings only? Didn't "He" have in his short-lived life sufficient proofs for the existence of a communication between Selves that does not seem to have any physical background, a communication that resists each and every scientific interpretation?

Once he declared himself dead to the world and still the "Gentleman" somehow, for some unexplicable reason felt in the deepest crevices of his soul that "He" is still alive. And he kept on searching for him everywhere, until he finally found him in the circus. And through meeting the "Gentleman," "He" found out that the "Gentleman" had not enjoyed for one moment the glory and fame that he had gained by robbing "He" of his thoughts.

The Gentleman told him: "I am respected and I am famous, yes, I have a wife and a son, yes. My wife still loves you; our favorite discussion is about your genius. She supposed you are a genius. We, I and she, love you even when we are in bed. Tss! It is I

who must make faces. My son—yes, he'll resemble you. And when, in order to have a little rest, I go to my desk, to my ink-pot, my books—there, too, I find you. Always you! Everywhere you! And I am never alone—never myself and alone. And when at night—you, sir, should understand this—when at night I go to my lonely thoughts, to my sleepless contemplations, even then I find your image in my head, in my unfortunate brain, your damned and hateful image!"

It turned out so as to prove convincingly to "He" that there was an absolute justice in the world, and because of that the robbed proved to be a robber, and the robber complained of theft and cursing.

And therefore, when the Baron shot himself so as to be the first to meet Consuelo in the next world, "He" said upon hearing of that: "No! I am coming. We shall prove then whose she is to be forever. . . ."

He died just as he lived, with the fullest possible conviction given to him by the mystical consciousness, that this world, the part of the universe as it is translated to us by our senses, is not the only world in existence, and that death may therefore mean an end only to one form of individual existence, may be only a transitional state from one form of life to another. It is this conviction that our temporal life may be only a spark of the eternal, inexhaustible fire called Life that made it possible for "He" to give such full expression in his life on this earth to that self in him which in some invisible manner, he felt to be connected and united with that Universal Self, which, as he told Consuelo, gives harmony, life and love to the world. It is this conviction that made him lead a life which, when ended, made it possible for Zinida and so many others to say that "He" was a man, and to envy Consuelo that she died through the efforts of "He" to save her from a low and filthy life. It is "He's" mystic sensing of the transcendental and its manifestations, which is concretely bound up with our everyday existence, that made him lead a great life and die the death of a great man.

We must remember, that if we go back to history, and ask ourselves what individuals have remained the unanimously acknowledged great men, we will find them to be those who died with the fullest conviction that death does not end all. It is not the greatness of Socrates' philosophical speculations that made him go down in history as the great immortal Socrates, but it is the calmness and the quietness with which he drank the cup of poison because of a certainty that our temporal existence flows into an eternal existence,

and that this vision of that existence is the reality and it matters therefore, more than anything else in the world. And what is true of Socrates is true of Jesus, Bruno, and Spinoza, and of every other real great man in the world.

It doesn't matter in the least, of course, as to just how we conceive the process of the absorption of our individual being into the Universal Being. It makes very little difference whether we believe with those who imagine the possibility of the individual self entering after it rids itself of the body, into the Universal eternality as a self with full preservation of its identity, or whether we believe with others who, for instance, like Spinoza, conceive of that absorption into universal spiritual existence as a process that ipso-facto destroys the self-hoodness of the individual beings. There is only one thing that is absolutely important in order that our lives should have a meaning, and in order that it should be possible to attach any value at all to our efforts and strivings, aims and purposes, ideas and visions and that is the conception or the intuition that the ending of our temporal life means an absorption into a Universality that has a will and a purpose that points directions and creates tendencies—and not into a Universality which is blind as it is dead and without purpose, as spiritless and valueless as it is will-less.

He too seemed to me like an old stone come to life, who knows all the beginnings and the ends of things, who considers when and what will be the end of the stone, of the grasses of the earth, of the waters of the sea, and of the whole universe from the pebble to the sun. And the sea is part of his soul, and everything around him comes from him, out of him. In the musing, motionlessness of the old man I felt something fateful, magical, something which went down into the darkness beneath him and stretched up like a searchlight into the blue emptiness above the earth; as thought it were he, his concentrated will, which was drawing the waves to him and repelling them, which was ruling the movements of cloud and shadow, which was stirring the stones to life. Suddenly, in a moment of madness, I felt, it is possible he will get up, wave his hand, and the sea will become solid and glassy, the stones will begin to move and cry out, everything around him will come to life, acquire a voice, and speak in their different voices of themselves, of him against him." I cannot express in words what I felt rather than thought at that moment; in my soul there was joy and fear, and then everything blended in one happy thought: "I am not an orphan on the earth, so long as this man lives on it."—From Gorki's *Reminiscences of Tolstoi.*

And I, who do not believe in God, looked at him for some reason very cautiously and a little timidly. I looked and thought: "This man is godlike."—Closing words of the *Reminiscences of Tolstoi.*

In a passage not quoted here Gorki says in his reminiscences of Tolstoi that his relations to God were very suspicious and that it reminded him of "The two bears in one den." May we not say the same of "He's" relations to God? Don't they, too, remind us of "The two bears in one den?" And it seems to me that in the relations of "He" to the Universal spirituality and spiritual Eternality, there is a message of Andreyev to mankind—a message which is in full harmony with the newest that there is in science today, and with the newest tendencies in modern thought at large. This message as I read it is: That human life has no meaning and no value if we cannot in some way, somehow, conceive the human self and the Universal Self as like two bears in one den, abiding in one and the same Universe. And if Tolstoi, Dostoyevsky and Andreyev are getting such a tremendous respect from mankind the world over for their creations, it is because mankind is beginning to realize more vividly than ever the necessity of postulating a spiritual reality that expresses itself through us and becomes in every moment of its existence deeper and fuller, because of our presence within it. Our being, in one way or the other, makes a difference to the Universal being, because we are part and parcel of it.

# IS THE PRACTICE OF FELLOWSHIP A NARCOTIC INDULGENCE?

## THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY AND HUMAN GROUPS

BY CAVENDISH MOXON

FELLOWSHIP is a magic word today. In a democratic country it seems the natural way of personal salvation and reform. Catholics, under the influence of the fellowship idea, are constantly insisting on obedience to the Church, the inherent powers of the hierarchy, the corporate life and social witness of Christians, the Body of Christ and the Fellowship of the Mystery.

Protestants are inspired by the belief in fellowship to make strenuous efforts to secure a reunion of all Christians in one fold. The numerous ecclesiastical fellowships for Church reform and the undenominational societies for moral, social, and political purposes, are a witness to men's growing faith in the power of co-operation to advance the cause of truth and goodness. Even liberal churchmen have so far forsaken their wonted method of individual influence as to form unions to advance their aims. Metaphysicians like Josiah Royce make the Beloved Community the object of Christian faith and the center of Christian life. Sociologists like Durkheim find in the fellowship of the clan or group both the primitive and the present meaning of God. Unanimist poets like Jules Romains tell us that "the men who henceforth can draw the souls of groups to converge within themselves will give forth the coming dream." It is true that M. Romains has not yet found a group that is fully divine. "None," he declares, "has had a real consciousness." But he has a confident hope that the day will come when a group shall verily exist as a soul. "On that day," he believes, "there will be a new god upon earth." [1]

[1] *The Modern Churchman,* VIII, p. 321.

Since the majority of mankind have a strong desire for the power that comes from sympathetic association, it is important to study the behavior of men in groups in order that this power may be consciously directed towards socially valuable ends. The pre-Freudian psychologists observed the inevitable levelling of the individuals who form a fellowship. It was well known that the idiosyncrasies of impulse are to some extent inhibited by the behavior of the group as a whole. The French student of society, M. Tarde, declared, "One is not born like others, one becomes so" by living in their society. A fellowship always involves imitation, and aims at the propagation of general ideas and collective values. There is much imitation and social suggestion in the loosely-knit society of a city or nation; the gregarious forces are more active in a religious or moral fellowship which is of one heart and mind; there is an almost overwhelming degree of social pressure upon the individual in a closely packed gathering. In the crude and violent behavior of the revival meeting we can clearly see the forces that are hidden behind the more repressed behavior in orderly religious worship.

By his recent work on Group Psychology, Freud has made possible a deeper insight into the satisfactions of fellowship by tracing the influence of unconscious desires within the group. Freud has discovered that the infantile desires for parental protection, providential love, and irresponsible, careless behavior are all satisfied by life in a group. When the conscious individual will is relaxed in obedience to the suggestive force of the group leader, the hidden desires can rise from the depths and combine with similar impulses in the other members in such a way as to issue in nonrational acts. The crowd then regresses from the relatively conscious control of adult individuality to the unconscious control of childish desire. The home was the infantile paradise in the days before self-reliance was necessary. Therefore the home forms the model for all subsequent group life. In the home the parent is loved and worshipped by the infant, who agrees to share the parental affection with the other children in his family, when he learns that it is impossible to exclude his rivals. Moreover, home life was the delightful time of unmoral indulgence of pleasant desires before the period of moral control. The child was content to be economically and morally dependent on the elders who protected it from attacks of strangers or enemies. The first love was the love for the mother and the father; there was no original instinct of sympathy for the family

form of the human herd. Only later appears the love for brothers and sisters, and the repression of rivalry and envious hate. The organized group regresses in its behavior to the family situation. The sympathetic bond of the members to the leader and to one another is largely dominated by the emergence of infantile love within the group. The escape of infantile affects is made easier by the prestige of the group and by the suggestive power of its leaders.

The exact nature of this suggestive force had long been in debate, until Freud and Ferenczi discovered its unconscious roots in the child-parent relation. The substitute for the father or mother authority appears not only in the hypnotist and the faith healer, but also in the crowd leader and the hero. The hypnotized patient and the obedient crowd reanimate their infantile attitude of dependence. It is therefore significant that both hypnotists and popular orators make use of methods that recall the parental authority of infancy. The hypnotist and the orator may use the masterful method that suggests the father or the quiet persuasion of the mother in order to gain the end desired. Since the dominence of the infantile unconscious depends on the suppression of conscious control, hypnotists and orators use repetitions of sights or sounds and gestures that narrow the attention and the rational activity. Suggestion, therefore works most powerfully when a dense crowd has a leader, or when a meeting of disciples is called for a definite purpose. Movement of body and distraction of mind both hinder the process. It is only when the unconscious is wholly free that suggestion may be direct and commands may be plainly made. So long as the conscious will retains some power of censorship over the unconscious and the temporarily submerged part of the self, the suggestions must be indirectly made in order to be successful. The child obeys the parental will so long as it can identify its own will with the commands of the elder. And this identification depends on the child's confidence in the elder's love. The ruthless assertion of authority on the part of a leader, by destroying the childish confidence in his love, calls forth a stubborn resistance to his alien will which now seems like a hostile attack upon the self. In any but the most ecstatically excited meeting, the successful speaker or preacher practises the indirect method of suggestion. By subtly concealing his will to suggest certain feelings, ideas, or acts, he eludes the resistance of his hearers.

The group and the gathering of men, in proportion to their psychological unity, behave in a way that is foreign to the normal life of their members in isolation. The crowd is anonymous and therefore irresponsible. When thus relieved from the checks of prudence and fear, the members of a group are capable of performing heroic or criminal deeds that they dare not do without a collective stimulus. The fellowship may indeed behave better than its units apart, but it usually behaves worse than its members at their best. This is natural, since the unity of the group involves some suppression of the inventive originality and the inspired individuality of its members. M. Gustave le Bon is probably right in saying that the crowd (in a psychological sense) is always inferior in ideas to some, at least, of its members, though it may be superior in the intensity of its feeling and the power of asserting its will. M. Anatole France is true to history and psychology when he allows M. Gamelin, the tender-hearted and kind lover and friend, to be led by the suggestion of the French Revolution to advocate cruel acts of merciless butchery.

In the primitive tribes of Australian aborigines the power and need of fellowship to foster a social and religious consciousness is most clearly seen. The normal life of nomadic and rustic men tends to destroy tribal unity. Hence their need of periodical gatherings of tribes and clans. At these festivals the normal methods of suggestion as practised in Christian churches are insufficient to rouse the dormant social sense of the members. The tribesmen must be roused to a frenzy of feeling and action in order to realize their social unity as the mystical body of their Totem. Without this strong social suggestion by means of fellowship, the tribal cohesion could not survive the long periods of separate family life and the primitive tendency to narcissistic isolation.[2]

From the lowly religion of these primitive men to the sacramental gatherings of Christian worship, the fellowship has played an important part in preserving and propagating the ideals which the inspired individual has created. Churches and prophets, states and reformers are consequently in perpetual conflict. The group ever seeks to keep the gains mankind has already won: the creative individual alone can win new gains for the world. The inevitable tension between these two factors of history provides the material for endless tragedy and heroism. At the dawn of history the groups are strong and the individuals weak. The dominant social suggestion

[2] Roheim, Imagi, VIII, p. 254.

almost excludes individual initiative, variety, and progress. In the middle ages, when ecclesiasticism was dominant, men readily caught the contagion of the Crusades. Even children could not resist the impulse to make a pilgrimage. When Stephen the shepherd boy of Cloyes in 1212 began a children's crusade, neither the edicts of authorities nor the threats of parents could counter the strong suggestion. Some children who were forcibly detained at home pined away and died because they could not respond to the social pressure which they regarded as a call of conscience to follow their leader.

The Reformation of the sixteenth century had to reckon with the awakening of individuality caused by the Renaissance. Groups and their leaders henceforth found it more difficult to exercise absolute power over the individual. The increasing use of conscious judgment reduced the sugestive power of established societies and limited.the influence of their leaders. As a consequence, the modern world is less subject to the appalling psychical epidemics that occurred in the middle ages—the outbreaks of asceticism and flagellation, pilgrimages and crusades, and the hunting of witches and demons.

The scientists and modernists of the present day have gone a step beyond the truth seekers of the Renaissance in their conscious rebellion against the domination of groups and the inadequate parent-substitutes at their head. The spread of scientific education will promote the growth of mental and moral adults: the increase of psychically mature persons will, in its turn, reduce the power of crowds to determine the behavior of infantile men. The next step towards self-reliance and conscious progress will come when the Freudian psychology has been applied to the home and school education of the people. At present the powerful unconscious forces in human groups tend towards fickle and impulsive behavior with little sustained purpose and reasonable will. The crowd or meeting enormously increases the suggestibility of the members present. The unanimous show of hands in a packed meeting may but express the dominating will of a single leader. The power of the group over a rational mind is seen in the case of a young American sceptic who was led by hostile curiosity to join the circle of an open-air revival meeting. Neither his armory of doubts nor his force of will could resist the contagious excitement. The young scoffer soon began to beat his breast and to express the common religious emotion of the worshippers.

A curious result of group feeling, unchecked by critical individual reason and will, is the collective vision of hallucination, which is occasionally recorded at times of religious excitement or collective strain. A notable instance of this was the soldiers' vision of the angels at the battle of Mons. Indeed the contagion of a vision or audition is such that the evidence of five hundred witnesses is not necessarily stronger than the evidence of one. Collective emotion is at the mercy of the primitive unconscious mind, and always seeks pleasure in the old paths and familiar fancies. The fellowship therefore tends to be intolerant of differences, complexities, and novelties. Ideas must be simple and familiar in order to please the group which prefers images or symbolic acts. Even in the French Revolution we see the tendency of the group to become a cult with a goddess, with a belief in Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, and with leaders to increase men's faith, to sustain their hope, and to destroy the enemies of the people. The explicitly religious fellowship exhibits the power of suggestion at its height. In a large or ancient society the dogmatic forms, ascetic disciplines, and symbolic rites tend to fix the attention, to control the thought, and to rule the will.

Are we then to conclude that the practice of fellowship in groups is condemned by psychology as unworthy of a place in civilized life? Do the facts drive us to an exclusive individualism? Certainly not. Society is indispensable for the making of men. Life without human fellowship is a contradiction in terms. Social intercourse is an essential means to individual growth in knowledge and power. But psychology has proved the practice of fellowship to be like alcohol in its narcotic effects upon the highest powers of conscious personality. Consequently fellowship must not be indulged in blindly lest it strangle initiative and weaken resistance to the infantile part of the self that is stimulated by the group.

Children are ready to accept almost any suggestion, and they retain their infantile impressions for life. Children should therefore be given more fellowship with children than with adults in order to develop their self-expression and will power. The aim of childish fellowship should be to prevent precocious development and over stimulation of the senses of the imagination. After the home, school is the chief formative fellowship for children. Yet the school, instead of educating children to resist the crushing domination of the group, often tends to produce a life-long habit of uncritical subjection and dependence. As if the boy's fear of his fellows was not already strong enough, Mr. Cecil Rhodes made popularity

a recommendation for his scholarships. In view of the atrocities that have been produced by esprit de corps, it is perilous to drill the children into unconscious conformity with group conduct as if it had divine authority.

With regard to the fellowship of adults. No rule can be made to apply to all alike, because all differ in mental age and symbolic need. The person who is naturally inclined to independent activity is in danger of ignoring the traditional values of fellowship. Such a man does well to come down from his lonely height at times, like Nietzsche's Zarathustra and sink himself in fellowship. He will soon prove his power to emerge and rise again in full possession of his soul. But fellowship is like a dangerous drug to the person who is naturally passive and obedient. The frequent indulgence in the enervating emotions of group gatherings uses the energy that is needed for a strong grasp of the real world and its tasks.

From this brief review of the psychological facts about fellowship we conclude that group emotion tends to inhibit the action of the conscious will, to let loose primitive impulses, and to discourage intellectual activity. The group has no higher soul than the psychically adult individual in its midst. Indeed the unity of the fellowship tends to an artificial suppression of personal excellence to the average level of traditional thought, conventional feeling, and primitive impulse. No fellowship as a whole ever makes a discovery or a moral advance. Not even humanity with a capital H can be regarded as essentially superior to the best individuals it contains. The development of the race depends on a healthy tension between groups and their members. No known group, nation or race is a perfect embodiment of human life. Mankind is in the making, and the growing points are the finest specimens of men and women at a given moment. The practice of fellowship is only justified insofar as it contributes to the development of mental and moral adulthood, and involves no sacrifice of the highest persons to the lowly passions of the mob. Groups that are formed to satisfy the temporary desires of men dissolve when these desires are satisfied. Uniformity means death: variety and schism are the signs of life. A rigidly organized world-state might lead to racial decay. The clearest indication of vigorous life is man's creative will to break up and remake his fellowships in order to enrich his personal life and to contribute to racial development.

# MYSTICISM AND ETHICS

BY HARDIN T. MCCLELLAND

LET us take counsel from the joyous humanity, loyal and wholesome and unceremonious, of Edward Everett Hale, especially as revealed in the Life and Letters recently edited by his son. Therein we find liberal Christianity untainted by the usual hypocrisy and meanness of those who make lofty claims but live miserably selfish and ignorant lives; we find innumerable kindly tokens of a generous and heroic disposition which took no umbrage and offered no spirit or petty spite or vengefulness. There was a spiritual reality about him which sheered away all artifice and formalism; it was, above all things I believe, the secret of his great and inspiring success as pastor of the Church of the Unity at Worcester, Mass., where he laid the foundations for his life work—"the establishment of a social security and worth in the New Civilization," a movement now well under way in Foxboro, Mass. Doctor Hale was a Unitarian positivist rather than an obscurantist or transcendentalist and tried, as he often said was his ambition, "to nobly and effectively transform machinery into life." If anything he was a little precocious and ahead of his time. He could have made a rather more effective delivery of philosophical opinion if he had been less given to the fine discriminations of social injustice, economic fallacy and warnings against the material advance of ruthless worldling power. Especially could he have greatly supplemented his metaphysical outlook if he had accepted the historical foundations of John Fiske's scientific training. At least the latter's Cosmic Philosophy had just the balancing strictures on romanticism and unquestioning faith which were perhaps the chief vulnerable points in Hale's conception of life. Like the early essays on Buckle's historicism and on the evolution of languages which are veritable storehouses of the ideas subsequently developed in his cosmological system, Fiske's philosophy was certainly less irreligious and more consistently expository of liberal evo-

lutionary ideas than Spencer's Synthetic Philosophy. The religious side of Fiske's work, as in his Cosmic Theism, etc., is the best, the most inspiring and heuristic of future meliorism in the world's code of duty, love, faith and morality. To be scientific in mind and yet religious and devout at heart—this simplicity and directness stands out especially strong in his Letters and shows him to have been a *reconciler* of the New School along with Drummond, Emerson, Channing, Huxley and William James.

Another side to the contrast between mysticism and ethics is that no honest devotee of the beautifully good and true will countenance either that thoroughgoing theriasm of man which Philodemus of Gadara taught, nor that sceptic dualism of Laodicean morality which the Marquis de Sade would use for specious apology. Just such a similar argument gives support to that subtle rebuttal "for spiritual security" which Emerson, the last of the pre-scientific philosophers, offered against Carlyle's pessimism. It shared no small favors it seems with Kierkegaard's aesthetic view of historic traditions, human life and destiny, and on the lonely sick-bed of modern morality prescribed that inevitable *Enten-Eller* (Either-Or) of Christianity which Pontus Wilner suavely assures us anticipated our own doubts and posted Vernon Lee's famous detour around Doctor Relling's vital lies and nothing-buts in Ibsen's "Wild Duck."

The great dilemma of Christianity is not between joy and sorrow, but between truth and falsehood, virtue and vulgarity, noble sacrifice and selfish interest. Any penny-passionate fool can be devoted to the personal equation whose satisfaction or infringement makes for joy or sorrow, being pleased or angered always in foreview of selfish interest. But it takes a truly profound strength of character, a mystically exalted spiritual exuberance, to be capable of the actual motives behind all honest Christian practice. The choice is therefore not one between the narrow limits of a dual affective susceptibility, but one between the ultimate poles of all possible human conduct between love and rhyomism, between mercy and brutality, between benevolence and exploitation. It is an inexorable choice, one not to be ignored or taken in perfunctory acceptance, for we are active members to the mischief of mercenary motive or else we are equally active protagonists of the beautifully good and true; there is no passive middle ground on which to lounge in lazy indifference to moral conquest over the world, whether we take it as being human or non-human.

Robert Louis Stevenson once wrote how far we differ in our lives and thoughts and teachings from the original doctrine and action-patterns of Christ, that we try to set up certain codes of rules, certain theories and systems of philosophy, rather than a devout ruling spirit of truth and courage, that reverent attitude toward life and God and the Universe which has power to nourish our souls and which has promise of ultimate redemption and emancipation. By both we are reminded that the only way "to learn aright from any teacher is by devotion and appreciation of example; we must, first of all, think ourselves into sympathy with his position and, in the technical phrase, recreate the character in ourselves." On this instruction we can always build an ethic whose principles counsel good conduct, generous friendships, heroic public services and devout worship of unworldly Deity. Thus mysticism has a practical value only when it is honestly practiced as a *life*, as the whole program and destiny of one's spirit, and not merely as an intellectual speculation or shrewd policy of vulgar hypocrisy.

The current criticism of the mystic's program as being impractical and not suitable to the requirements of the modern world is a mere slush-fund of specious argument; it aims to hold our petty purposes down to folly and extravagance, it would corrupt our minds with worldliness and war so that a few murky-minded knaves can tyrannize and exploit all their fellows. Broadly speaking, I agree with Evelyn Underhill who explains mysticism as being "the expression of the innate tendency of the human spirit toward complete harmony with the transcendental order, whatever be the theological formula under which that order is understood. This tendency in great mystics gradually captures the whole field of consciousness; it dominates their life and in the experience called *mystic union,* attains its end. . . . It is the deliberate and active return to the divine fount of things, it aims to teach men to transcend the sense world and to live on high levels the spiritual life." Accordingly the mystic heeds the inner call of spiritual duty, rather than the external beckoning and empty promise of reward offered by the materiality of things. He seeks the truth and beauty of reality, not the sordid spoils of a sophist rhyomism. He tries to realize his highest aims, his noblest impulses, his brightest visions of the empyrean world. This duty which he holds so bounden and inescapable is that toward himself, his fellows and his God; it is inexorable in its demands and immediate in its rewards. The truth and beauty of reality are the garments of Nature taken out of their seasonal discretion and ren-

dered into eternal types of wisdom and inspiration. The bright visions of the overworld seduce his slow response to a flame once more and light his path to Horeb, Olympus or Helicon; they treasure no regret or half reluctant farewell, they beckon no disaster or defeat.

The mystic holds vast heritage from the past and in a measure is the curator of man's fast-failing power to administer his traditional estate. His intellectual goods are never sold at premium to the vulgar press, but his spiritual insights are given ever freely in hospitable welcome to resurgent souls who make their purchases only with the heavenly coin of love and faith, honesty and courage, innocence and inward joy.

No one, however dull or mischievous, but feels an occasional urgency to make some spiritual response to things divine, take glimpses of the mystic vision or heed the call to amplify and improve the wider life of man. No one, however mercenary or stupid with the wreck and rancorous rewards of worldly life, but comes sooner or later to feel the need of higher prospects than his petty plans can offer, to see the brighter visions of a more far-reaching horizon than usually obtains in his cloudy clamorous world.

What an empty thing this poor existence of ours would be if no one relayed the torch of thought and trust and friendliness along, if no one sought courageous emprise on new paths or tried to coax the vulgarian up a peg or two, out of his murky cellar, out into a nobler world where he could find it worth his while to realize and practice the good. A fine specimen of manhood is never realized however, except through taking life seriously, through having a genuine earnestness and a dauntless energy for every task, being ever ready and willing to make personal sacrifice, and with such heroism trusting in the ultimate destiny of all the worthy aims of true nobility. Emotion must be guided and controlled, the functions of fancy must be sifted for the good of both head and heart, not for sake of selfish pleasure or the exotic fanfare of jazz, not for the lewd luxury and lucre-lust of hedonism, and certainly not for the problematic thrill of strange doctrines. Not any of these, but the sturdy company of harmonious concord, the strength and endurance of chastened continence, the easy balance of naturalness and naive philosophy, all taken together in the mystic counsel of human life make up the only valid ethic of a just and reverent conduct. The vulgarian, like the worldling Fortunatus of old, seeks only some easy road to wealth which will serve rather than suppress his will-to-folly, his

pride, greed, extravagance and selfish strategems. The mystic on the other hand, like Isis, grown weary and footsore on the sun-baked Egyptian desert still searching for the mangled and scattered remains of Osiris, goes eternally on seeking the meagre remnants of truth and beauty, wisdom and virtue, which are still extant in the modern world.

The mystic knows that these things persist apart from man's memory and affection for them, that they are not adjectival but substantive existences, not mere figments of associated fancy or ideal conceptions of some Utopian Erewhon, but actual qualities and achievements of proven potency in the only *real world* of human character and spirit. The mystic understands that there is continuity of all that is good and true, that it has no fragile link to cause disjunction or failure in time of trial; he knows full well the subtle art of playing melodies on life's Aeolian Harp, the master touch which deftly carries the overtones as part of the general harmony. Like Coleridge says of truth in his beautiful figure, the mystic understanding has exalted hold on the universal nature of things, whence "it persists like a gentle spring on watercourse, warm from contact with the genial earth, which turns obstacles into its own ever-solvent form and character, and as it makes its way increases its stream. And should it be arrested in its course by a chilling season, it suffers delay not loss, and awaits only a Spring sun or a change in the wind to awaken again and roll merrily onwards."

Perhaps the one most glorious phase of mystic exaltation arises from the knowledge of the soul's true nature, origin, limitations and destiny. It is seen to be truly enough "the light behind the bodily veil," as Swedenborgians and theosophists say. But it is more: it is the unquenchable beacon of hope and faith and courage and love; it is the signal fire which lends code to the silent communion of saints and sages the world over. It knows that the soul is not mechanical but metaphysical, that it is man's real self trying, with what sorry success at times, to express itself clumsily but yet sometimes intelligibly through the muffling laminated garment-folds of physical sense and succor. It is the mystic's exalted consciousness of soul which proves to him that it is not a physical refinement of empirical function, but a spiritual expression of cosmic intelligence; that it functions as a radial center from which all visions and virtues perennially emanate. It is orthodox mystic doctrine that life would indeed be truculent and unbearable were we to make no distinction between the moral soul and the mechanical body. True enough, it

may turn out that what we call the body may simply be an organic system embracing certain processes of life which can be made habitual, mechanical, and through which we are enabled to become ethical beings exercising moral relations with our fellows. But it is no credential of dignity or duty without further process of spirit, the function of soul being to give just this ethical ability, just this capacity for moral fellowship in the world. And the mystic goes even farther. He holds that it is still probable also that the dissolution of the bodily system of mechanical habits, as at death, might mean the acquiring of some other perhaps better suited system which would not be so useful for communicating with people on this planet, but which might be quite efficiently the means for communicating with intelligent beings elsewhere in the Universe, so that life might go on developing and creatively aiming higher and higher even after the present body had been long ago left behind. Our ethics should always keep in mind that rude fact of our perennial spiritual awakening that morality is still very much a personal worldly conflict of selfish ideas and desires. Our ethics would therefore do well to always remember the mystic's viewpoint as being primarily a spiritual attitude toward life and the Universe.

Mystics like Jacob Boström believe that we can be real factors in the evolutionary process of the world by taking a decisive and active part in the great life of the Universe, in the rational meliorism which drives ever on through the directive wisdom of the concretely personal ideas we have of and share with God whose Divine Spirit does not exist in time or space but in the structure of spiritual reality, in the functions of spiritual truth. Such a mystic meliorism is rational and drives us ever forward and upward because it is grounded in the Aristotelian *katharsis* of pure constructive activity; it is positive and good, not negative and treacherous. Boström was in touch with the pulse of Nature and the great Divine Heart which gives her warmth, fertility and supernal beauty. He had no sham psychologism of religion such as makes up the "Belief in God and Immortality" by Professor Leuba, who ultimately shows little more than the difference of attitude with which different men approach and view the problems of literature and life. Some, as scientists, take up literal, sensory, detailed and "verified" concepts as being the fundamental constituents of morality and religion; they take everything apart as if it were a machine or a political speech, and wonder why there is so little actually intelligent content and utility in it. Others, such as professional saints and religionists, look to

whatever is emotional and obscure, metaphorical and hermeneutic, so as to draw therefrom a refined disproof of the former's abulient or static intellectualism. The true mystic then finds himself between two equally mistaken and oposing factions; neither of them is sufficiently accurate in what they have experienced, and neither of them is much concerned to rule out artifice and bring an honest intellectual temper to bear on the situation. It falls to the lot of the mystic to see clearly into what is true and what is false, to understand fully the causes and conditions of their fallacies, and to try to share his own enlightenment with them. Mysticism then is the highest ethical principle, it involves power of soul, spiritual response to the largest environment, it is a cosmic consciousness covering the whole universe of Nature, God, Mind and Love.

# MORAL PROOF OF RELIGIOUS CLAIMS

BY VICTOR S. YARROS

IT IS NOW generally admitted by those who think critically and scientifically that the tests for religious theories and propositions are not, and in the nature of things cannot be, different from the tests for any other kind of theories and propositions. "Thought is all there is," said the late Henri Poincaré, the eminent French mathematician and physicist, even though thought be no more than "a flash of light between two eternities of darkness." If scientific methods and processes are of no avail in the realm of religion, then that realm is unreal and illusory—a mere mirage. We may legitimately be asked, indeed, to entertain, provisionally, this or that *hypothesis* concerning religious phenomena, but, in turn, we have the right to demand that such an hypothesis shall be treated with no more solemnity or awe than, say, the Darwinian hypothesis, or the theory of Relativity. It is not wicked to reject any religious theory, no matter how long it may have reigned in the intellectual world, when new facts establish its inadequacy or invalidity.

How, let us ask, do we arrive at religious truth? Let us grant, for the sake of the argument, that the pivotal belief in all religions is that in the existence of God—an unknowable and inscrutable Power in control of all nature. How does one reach or form that belief?

There are only two possible ways to that goal. One is revelation, the other is called science. In a world full of miracles, there is certainly nothing inherently impossible in revelation. But, since humanity is prone to illusion, error and fantasy, we cannot accept an assertion by any one concerning an alleged revelation in the absence of very strong and convincing proof. A man tells us that God communicated certain wonderful but vague truths to him, or dictated to him a set of positive commandments and principles. We are bound to ask him how he knows that it was God who had appeared to him or had spoken to him. *No proof of revelation is pos-*

*sible*, however, for the most sincere and excellent seer or philosopher may mistake the voice of his own heart for that of God. If, for example, Jesus actually thought and said that he was the son of God in an unusual, miraculous sense, a proposition which is open to doubt, the question still remains, *"is Jesus necessarily a good authority on the source of his inspiration?* And the same question must be asked concerning every other founder of a religion, every other alleged special messenger of the hypothetical Supreme Being. The "divinity" of this or that prophet or savior of the human race is a claim which cannot be established by another claim—special revelation. Neither claim is susceptible of proof, and neither rests even on probability.

We are thus reduced to the prosaic, humble, empirical, experimental and common-sense methods of demonstrating religious propositions. We are driven to employ the tools and means of science. Does this conclusion alarm the religious thinker? Not if he is really a thinker, if he knows the nature and methods of science.

Among the modern scholars who have reflected on the religious problem and the phenomena of what we call the spiritual world there are bold men who accept the challenge of science and assert with complete confidence that essential religious truth *has been established precisely as other truths have been or are established.* These writers make no appeal to mere faith, to any "will to believe." They are prepared to submit their beliefs to the tests prescribed by the most rigorous savants.

Thus, Prof. L. P. Jacks, to whose moral solution of the problem of Evil I have referred critically in a previous issue of THE OPEN COURT, not only attempts to justify that solution, but takes the general position that religious and spiritual truth can be demonstrated *only by moral means*—that is, by facts and arguments drawn from the moral world. There are, he contends, only two possible theories of what we call the universe. One supposes the universe to be dead—mechanical, soulless, purposeless, irrational, while the other postulates a supreme will in the universe, a beneficent purpose in its creation and development, and a vital and spiritual principle in it and back of it. Which of these theories should we provisionally accept, and what can we do to test them? Mr. Jacks' answer is quite fair and candid. He claims no immunities or privileges for religion; he is willing to subject religious doctrines to genuinely scientific processes. Only, what processes and tests are available in the domain of religion? How can we conduct experiments to ascertain

the truth of this or that religious hypothesis? Mr. Jacks argues that life is the only available laboratory for religious experiments and the results of conduct are the only possible and proper tests of the theories of religious teachers.

Let one group or community live in accordance with the theory that the universe is dead, or mechanical, and that morality is a meaningless term; and let another group or community proceed on the opposite theory—that God rules the universe; that it moves toward a goal and is informed and inspired by a purpose, and that man possesses spiritual freedom and is capable of moral growth and perfection. What happens to the first, and what to the second? Compare the results, says Mr. Jacks, and you have the verification of one or another of the two theories.

It is hardly necessary to say that Mr. Jacks himself regards the first theory as established beyond rational doubt. If civilized humanity had not accepted the doctrines associated with religion—the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the golden rule, the supremacy of love and mercy—where would the world be today? Men would not be different from the beasts of prey; the struggle for life would be ruthless, and force and cunning would prevail over right, generosity and sympathy. History, therefore, Mr. Jacks contends, *has demonstrated the validity and soundness of the New Testament theory of the universe and man's place and mission in it.*

The argument is legitimate and logical. Mr. Jacks' *method* is scientific. But can his premises be accepted? And does history furnish the proof of the Christian philosophy?

In the first place is it true that we are bound to choose between the two hypotheses formulated by Mr. Jacks? Must the thoughtful and scientific thinker declare himself either a mechanist or a vitalist? And must he who calls himself a mechanist necessarily assume that he has solved the riddle of existence? The answer to each of these queries is, No.

The Agnostic refuses to put any dogmatic label upon himself. He has no solution for any ultimate problem. He stops where science stops. He ponders and analyzes experience and draws conclusions from it. He examines himself and observes his fellows, contemporary and of past ages. He analyzes facts and ventures upon cautious generalizations. Where the facts suggest no satisfactory hypothesis, he suspends judgment until more facts, enough facts, have been accumulated and studied. Now, the facts of nature and recorded history do *not* seem to the Agnostic to warrant *any* provi-

sional theory regarding the governance of the universe or the power manifesting itself in it. At the same time, the Agnostic who adopts the mechanistic position intelligently merely affirms that it is *convenient* to regard the universe as a mechanism. He does not assert anything concerning purposes and meanings in the universe; he merely rejects naive, facile, childish explanations of cosmic phenomena, explanations which add to our difficulties instead of removing them. When asked to choose between the two theories formulated by Mr. Jacks, he gently but firmly declines to do so—he is unprepared, he says, to accept either. The universe, he holds, is what is, and all we humans can do is to give names to things and separate them when advisable and helpful, into classes and sets. The question whether the universe is dead or alive, mechanical or free, is without significance to the Agnostic. He points out that if we humans who *call* some parts of nature animate and others inanimate, some inorganic and some organic and super-organic. It would seem to be ridiculous to say that the tiniest and least important insect is alive and the sun is dead—the sun, whose rays nourish and sustain all living creatures on this and—perhaps—on other planets, but, defining life as we do, that conclusion is natural and proper, and not at all ridiculous or impudent.

But, it may be urged, if we take the universe as it is, and frame no ultimate theories concerning it, what basis have we for ethics and for esthetics? Why prefer beauty to ugliness, gentleness to cruelty, peace to war, love to hate? Why dream of justice and solidarity, of progress?

The answer to this set of questions is clear, certain and scientific. *The basis and sanction for morality are natural, not supernatural.* The "kingdom of God" is within us; that is to say, the sentiment of justice and righteousness, as well as the sentiment of mercy, is innate and as characteristic of our nature as the instinct of self-preservation. We are moral not because of some external command, but *because we cannot help being so.* Man is not antisocial by nature; he is not condemned to a savage struggle for existence. Altruistic conduct is just as essential to survival, just as primordial, just as "natural," as egoistic conduct. Mutual aid, sympathy, love, self-subordination are quite as important, as factors of evolution and progress, as self-preservation, self-assertion and self-expression. All human instincts and emotions register the experience of the race, its trials, errors, failures and victories.

Why, then, regard ethics as miraculous and supernatural? Nothing could be more arbitrary, less scientific, less philosophical than a view which regards rational principles of human conduct as something outside and beyond racial and general experience, as something not traceable to need and manifest utility. Professor Huxley was guilty of a curious fallacy when he contrasted cosmic ethics with human ethics. He overlooked the fact that we have evolved our ethics to suit our own human conditions and needs, and that it is foolishly arrogant to apply our standards to the cosmos. Certainly our ethics must make for our survival in the cosmos; adaptation to universal law is implied in any conception or policy or course of conduct intended to promote human welfare and human progress. Once we assume or feel that life is good and desirable, we commit ourselves to the corollary all men have the same right to live and live abundantly. We cannot demand life for ourselves and deny it to others. Justice thus emerges, and then negative beneficence, and finally positive beneficence. The highest conduct of the highest groups of human beings finds justification in its fruits—the double fruits of peace and contentment with one's self and of service to others.

And yet the human race is far from being completely socialized or civilized. It is idle to pretend that history is a record of the uninterrupted advance of the good, the true and the beautiful. The solidarity of humanity is an ideal, but how far we have yet to travel, how hard to labor, how much to suffer, on the road to that ideal! Race antipathy, national prejudices and hatreds, class and group antagonisms, conflicts of interest and ambition, these sources of evil and misery are still threateningly active and powerful. *The moral order has yet to be established,* and it will be established by weak, poor, groping, errant humanity only after ages and millenniums of tragic waste and anguish. Even today no so-called Christian nation dares practice Christian teaching. No lover of peace, for example, would seriously ask the nations least disposed to grab and plunder to disarm and rely on the subtle influence of non-resistance. Might is no guaranty of right, and right is not always sure of victory over brute force and aggression. To appeal to history is to appeal to a most uncertain and confused record. It will support no particular creed. To believe in the possibility, probability and even certainty of moral progress, on the other hand, is to affirm that, with all its defects and weaknesses, humanity is capable of realizing its own moral ideals, and that slowly the better sides of common human

nature are bound to prevail over the worse. Bossuet said that the malignty of the human heart is prodigious, and that it ever inclines to evil. If this were true, even the crude and rudimentary civilization we possess could never have evolved, and the religious and moral seers would never have founded systems or attracted hosts of devout and ardent followers. Man does not live by material comforts alone, and he will not be content with technical, economic and industrial progress. He will long, work and fight for spiritual and moral progress, but he will not, in doing so, stake all on a particular theory of the universe. Least of all will he base principles of conduct on a theory concerning the origin, purpose and destiny of existence, for those who plead inability to form such theories are as ethical, and always have been as ethical, as the stanchest upholders of dogmatic religious creeds. Society is not cemented by creeds and theories; it is built upon and held together by stern necessity. To say society is to say morality; even the social animals and insects have rigid moral codes, which they obey instinctively.

In short, moral tests are relevant and applicable only to moral experiences. They prove nothing outside or beyond the moral sphere. What is known in science and logic as the law of parsimony forbids us to build ethical codes on the shaky foundation of question-begging propositions.

So far as Christianity in particular is concerned, it is doubly rash for any one to claim that history "demonstrates" its central conceptions. Of all fairly advanced and mature religions, Christianity is the least vital or significant. Christianity is professed, but not practised. As we have seen in several previous articles in this Review, not a single essential principle or command laid down by Jesus is observed in spirit or letter. The states which choose to call themselves Christian not only ignore all the vital teachings of Jesus, but venture to assert that only individuals as individuals are bound to live up to such teachings, while that bodies politic have ethics of their own, ethics totally opposed to the Christian code. As jurors, as judges, as officers of the law, as soldiers of the so-called Christians systematically violate the doctrines of Jesus. In all dealings with other states, with criminals and with conscientious objectors, governments and popular majorities act as if Christian tenets and ideas had never been promulgated. How, then, can any serious and thoughtful person contend that *the conduct of Christian communities proves the validity of a theory that is never applied?*

Mere probity, honesty, decency, reasonable regard for others, love of justice and of rational mercy are not traits peculiar to Christianity. Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists, as well as Agnostics possess them in the same degree as the so-called Christians.

It has been argued—by Mr. Balfour, among others—that the Agnostics are, socially and ethically speaking, parasites; that they are safe and comfortable because they are able to enjoy the fruits of a civilization that is based on belief in divine guidance and supported by the great majority of men and women; that society would face chaos and dissolution were the majority to lose their religious convictions, and that Agnostic morals, founded on utilitarian ideas, would prove hollow, impotent and worthless.

It is impossible to dogmatize on this point. Sudden conversions of the ignorant or superficially "educated" millions to Agnosticism is of course out of the question. Not only current religions, but current superstitions, live and thrive despite all that science and empirical knowledge are doing to banish crude, foolish and absurd beliefs. Men have believed the most grotesque and ludicrous things, and will continue to believe such things. To quote from a recent article by Professor Gilbert Murray on faith and worship:

"In the field of religion, beliefs can seldom be put to any effective test, and beliefs about very remote past history never can. The belief lives or dies by its own power of survival or attraction, and by the credulous or incredulous, barbarous or rational, temper of the society in which its seed is sown. It is never killed by meeting a fact, for there are no facts."

And G. Lowes Dickinson, writing of widespread beliefs and their evidential value, said recently:

"Men have believed that the soul lives like a pale shadow, craving blood to feed it; that it migrates into innumerable forms of animals or of men; that it repeats indefinitely its main occupations here and especially that of fighting; that it is tortured for aeons in hells or that it sings hymns forever. What have men not believed! And how miserable should we be if we believed anything similar."

Students of history and of evolution in ideas and mental habits are not afraid that the gradual disappearance of curent superstitions or unfounded beliefs will endanger the pillars of civilization. And the abandonment of the whole arbitrary assumption that the mystery of life, of the universe itself, is somehow solved, or rendered less baffling and less difficult by explaining it, verbally, in terms of a still deeper mystery, is not in the least likely to destroy men's painfully

acquired belief in essential ethical standards. Men will not revert to stealing, killing, bearing false witness, and the like, no matter what they think, or assert, concerning the incomprehensible, inscrutable Power behind phenomena. To repeat, we are born with social as well as with anti-social instincts. Reason fortifies and vindicates the social instincts, the better and finer sides of human nature. If religion henceforth fails to satisfy reason and to meet the tests of science, it will fade and vanish from the lives of thoughtful and sincere men. He is no true friend of religion who divorces it finally from science and philosophy based on science. He is no friend of religion who asks us to accept a gratuitious hypothesis which serves no purpose and does not contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the realm of religion. There are writers who confidently anticipate a great religious revival, but unless it be justified by reason, it will share the fate of other such emotional and hysterical revivals.

We must not mistake revivals of superstition for religious revival. The choice is between a scientific and philosophical religion and modest humble Agnosticism.

# THE GREAT TEACHER

BY HENRI VANDERBYLL

CONTACT with nature originally developed man. Association with his fellow being teaches and develops him at present. The great teacher of the human mind and soul appeared when the first ancient family was established. Man's lessons became increasingly difficult as the family grew into the tribe, the nation, the empire and, finally, into the human race. It is often imagined that books, Bibles, and universities add to intelligence and to the soul. The human being, however, develops through contact with his surroundings, only. Life, the life which we at present know as the community life, eclipses the modern professor and preacher in this respect: it is able to make an individual realize a truth, whereas a fellow being is merely capable of acquainting him with a truth. There is a difference between realization and knowledge. The mind possesses a certain capacity for storing knowledge of facts—facts of nature, moral facts, ethical facts. But that knowledge is often like so much wind when experience pierces its tightly stretched rubberlike surface, and causes it to crumble into a hopeless heap of not-understanding. What mind, for example, does not know that "Thou shalt not kill"? What human being, on the other hand, fully realizes the truth on which the commandment is founded? Who, indeed, does not know that God is infinite, eternal and omnipresent? Who, on the other hand, realizes the much uttered fact?

Realization results from individual experience, only. Knowledge is merely capable of clothing in words and sentences that which the innermost being feels to be true as a result of experience. One reads the thoughts of a great thinker, and instantly knows them to be true. The thoughts cause certain chords in our soul to vibrate sympathetically, stir memories of facts experienced within one's own lifetime or experienced by one's ancestors, some ten thousand years ago. When mere experience becomes intelligent experience, when the inner being speaks through its interpreter, the mind, the

individual possesses a knowledge of fact and truth which is as unshakeable as is the foundation of the world. This does not mean, as some modern philosophers would have us believe, that *all* knowledge can be extracted from the inner being at will provided certain requirements in the natural of physical or psychic conditions are fulfilled. Man's inner being is the sum total of his individual experience, inherited and otherwise. And that total is inconsiderable as yet. What, if his soul has not vibrated harmoniously with an infinite immensity of universe? Shall he know the mysteries of the ultimate? Shall he rend the veil of matter, and face the body-consuming fire of the spirit? At the most, he can array in thoughts and garb in words that which he is as sum total of experience. He will grope for expression, and crave it, perhaps. And he will, undoubtedly, hear from the lips of some fellowman the music that stirs his soul into shouting: I know!

As to individual experience, it is furnished by the individual's immediate surroundings—surroundings that originally were natural, but that very gradually, at the hand of man, became not-natural, artificial. Once man had achieved his conquest of nature, he utilized her forces to his own advantage, but practically shut her out from his world of inner experience. She was no longer capable of further destroying his self-centeredness, of threatening him into intelligent activity, or of making him hear gods travel thunderingly across heavenly bridges. Man built himself a new world of experience, in which eventually human opponents and enemies supplanted the dangers of the primeval forest, and in which the hardships of the social life succeeded those of the life of nature. Nature's antagonism changed into the opposition of the social life.

In considering association with fellow beings the great teacher of man, we should distinguish between the latter's experience gathered within the society and that gained as a result of community having intercourse with community. Progressing mankind develops into organization within organization, and the more nearly mature it becomes the more numerous are its concentric organizations. Where, originally, the family led its solitary existence, and was instrumental in furnishing experience for its members, only, the nation furnished a certain amount of experience for all its members, the city a larger for a smaller number, and the family within the city the bulk for a few individuals. The less self-centered man became, the larger became his experience furnishing world, spreading from the family to the city, from the city to the nation and,

finally, from the nation to the community of nations. Organizations, like the family or the nation, are like individuals. They suffer, experience and learn as the individual does. But their experiences and lessons are distributed among their members in accordance with the latter's capacity for accepting them.

A study of the manner in which community associated with community in the past, and a study of the result of such association, will assist us in gaining a clear conception of the relationship between the individual and society. The first fact that strikes us in our study is that the opposition which man first encountered in nature is very much in evidence, though in a different form. On the surface of things that may seem to be an unfortunate fact. It should be considered, however, that the antagonistic spirit of the individual's external world is not produced by deliberate and evil intent, but owes its presence to "the nature of things." True, it is that, to all appearances at least, fellow beings whose paths of life cross ours within the community, deliberately and maliciously obstruct our progress, or destroy our hopes. And if we hold them absolutely responsible for their activities in the universe, there is no gainsaying the fact that organized human life shows signs of being a disheartening proposition. But our ideas about ultimate responsibility in the universe become extremely prejudiced when we consider the activities of our fellow men. It so happens that our brother rarely acts as we do, for which reason we are immediately prepared to criticize and to condemn utterly. Of course, there cannot be question of criticism and utter condemnation in the case of an ultimate responsibility which is also divine. The natural course, therefore, is to hold man absolutely responsible for his activities in immensity, a proceeding which is, invariably, disastrous to the progress of moral and ethic. We make a mistake, however, when we stop at the surface of life. We should penetrate further into its depths. Surfaces of life and parts of the universe, when considered by themselves, present in the majority of cases an evil aspect. The most provincially minded person discovers the largest amount of evil in the world. He fails to see the marvelous interrelationship of the things that are and of the events that take place. He can only see the ugliness of an object or of a creature because his narrow mind is incapable of linking their presence with that of an infinite immensity of things and creatures.

Should we merely cut a single scene from the film of history, that of nature threatening and bullying infant man, for instance, the

impression that ugliness marked the beginnings of human development will take hold of us. But when we view the scene in connection with others that follow, when we see man, as a result, transmuted from brute into intelligent being, the ugliness referred to completely vanishes. And the business of man associating with man, of nation having intercourse with nation, loses its sordid nature when we penetrate beyond human activity into its deeper meaning. We should, first of all, realize that strife and struggle in the universe result from differences among its members. It is these differences which make antagonism between individuals a necessary evil. There is question of one self traveling in this direction, of another self in an opposite one. When their paths cross, as will happen in the social life, interest opposes interest, and a clash is inevitable. As the result of the two forces that propel the individual, the first his individual momentum, and the second the external world that compels him, the direction which he eventually follows lies somewhere between the individually desired one and the direction of the external force. The compulsion emanating from the external world invariably results in suffering of some sort. The suffering constitutes experience, and is caused not only by external conditions and circumstances, but also by the individual's reluctance to ignore the voice of his self. Community life is instrumental in arousing self-centered man into a greater degree of universe-consciousness. We should be careful, therefore, lest we consider ourselves, the individual, to be much pitied, and the external world of humans that oppose our aims to be much condemned. Neither pity nor condemnation are in order. The fact of the matter is that our more or less immature condition invites certain opposition, allows our soul to be wounded, as a result of which we experience and mature. There is no difference, so far as method is concerned, between a natural external world developing man into a thinker. The only difference must be found in the means employed, which in the first instance is nature and in the latter, man.

It should be realized, in the second place, that differences among its members are absolutely essential to the existence and the progress of a universe. We cannot conceive of a homogeneous existence, of a whole consisting of parts that are absolutely alike. Nor can we imagine a humanity whose individuals are alike in every respect. It is because A differs from B that both are enabled to experience and develop. We learn our life's lessons chiefly from our enemies and adversaries, and seldom from our best friends—from those that

understand us because they are very much like we are. The bitter experiences of nations, too, experiences which they gathered through the instrumentality of sister nations, were forces that progressively propelled their citizens or their descendants. The intercourse of nations, as history well shows, has seldom been of an amiable nature. The bulk of historical data refer to battles, conquests, and destruction. History is a series of clashes between Me and not-Me, of triumphant victories and crushing defeats, of new national glories blazing over the sepulchres of departed ones. But a system underlies these apparently senseless attempts at human destruction. The system is evolution's own, and bears a remarkable resemblance to the one employed by her in the depths of space for the purpose of building solar systems. The history of the stellar universe, too, is a series of destructive clashes followed by blazes of new-found glory. Cataclysm and birth are inseparably associated in the starry depths of space. Throughout nature we find life rear itself upon the throne of death, today emerge from yesterday's shriveling womb. The thing born contains within itself the thing that died, in a higher form, perhaps. In the crashing sound of doom the joyful shout of a new and bigger life is heard.

The melancholy, age-long funeral procession of leading civilizations marches to the music of life. The march is a progressive one. Prominent among the millions of trails made by human beings on the sands of the past, trails that lead hither and thither and nowhere, is a shining highway that directly links an obscure yesterday with the present. It is the highway of civilization, built by the leaders among nations. Whenever national catastrophe cried unto high heaven, and glory spent its last flicker of light, a successor appeared to build the next section of the highway. Human evolution trod alternately on the roseate glory of nations and on the clouds of their darkest despair. The leading civilizations of the past came and went, they rose and fell, they boasted of their strength and they were silent in death.

One fact concerning the leading nations of yesterday immediately strikes us: they were materially powerful. Vastness of territory, wealth, and efficient instruments of attack and defense, were prerequisite to leadership. They enabled the nation in question to make its voice heard in all corners of the world. For, at bottom, there was no question of accumulation of wealth, of acquisition of formidable armies and navies, but rather of the distribution of thought and intelligence. From the powerful nation, superior intel-

ligence, if only a one-sided superior intelligence, radiated and was assimilated by sister nations to the extent that the latter were capable of assimilating it. Thus we find many a scar of civilization to represent a wound inflicted by powerful brutality, a wound which was healed by the balsam of newly-acquired intelligence. Like new stars in the more or less dark firmament of humanity, Sumeria and Akkadia, China and India, Babylonia and Assyria, Egypt and Palestine, Greece and Rome, one by one flickered up, and one by one were extinguished. Their respective existences were enveloped in the smoke of war, and stained by the blood of conquest. Yet was the gift which thy tendered human progress sufficiently valuable to prevent their death from being absolute. Their physical strength, their material glory and power, met with complete annihilation. But something that was the nation, in an intellectual sense, continued to exist. That something was the best which evolution was capable of arousing in the brain of man at that particular time.

The truest artist in creation is the great Potter who fashions men from human clay. Achievements in the way of man-fashioning are the best but for a little while. New ideals must be realized, and new races spring up, as if by magic, from nowhere. They become materially powerful, take their place in the front ranks of the marching columns of humanity, while their predecessors fall back to the rear, and sometimes perish by the wayside. But the latter's noblest qualities and their highest intelligence are inherited by their successors. As far as their leadership, their thoughts and morals in general, are concerned, they have become antiquated, and are no longer responding to the highest demands of a progressing human race.

Although the history of nations is a melancholy story in one way, it is a sublime one in another. All death is melancholy when considered a mere cessation of existence. The realization, however, that only the hollow shell which contained the principle of life is the rightful share of the grave, causes us to view death in the light of a sublime necessity. Life's principle, indeed, does not become oblivion's prey, but continues in the keeping of universal life, which utilizes for higher and higher purposes. We, individuals, may dispel the gloomy doubts concerning the inevitable tomorrow with the holy conviction that we have given our children that which we are. We may, furthermore, rest assured that our children shall be more than we are at present. They are climbing the heights of human progress, starting where we are ready to leave off, being equipped

with an inherited experience and knowledge which we and our ancestors had to acquire. They develop in a world of thoughts and objects that are new for us, but that soon will be old and commonplace for them. In our children, and in our children's children, we, the individual, shall continue to exist—not in a physical but in a soul-sense.

These conceptions of death and continuity fit into the seemingly melancholy scheme of rising and falling civilizations. As far as intelligence and moral quality are concerned, individuals and nations are immortalized in their descendants and their successors in this manner: succeeding generations contain preceding ones. The highest present intelligence contains that of Lao-Tze, that of Hammurabi, that of Moses, that of Socrates. But it surpasses any individual intelligence of the past. Only a twentieth-century soul may possess the new understanding, experiencing things that never before were experienced, living in surroundings that exist for the first time in the history of man. Immortality itself, therefore, leads the funeral procession of perishing civilizations. But it is the immortality of thought and soul, both of which continue to exist within a larger existence. Men never thought in vain, nor acted without purpose, as their lives constituted stepping stones that led their descendants to higher realms of human development. It is therefore that we are sometimes struck by the fact that "there is nothing new under the sun." The fact is only an apparent one, however. Inventions made thousands of years ago that are still useful to humanity, have been improved upon by an intelligence higher than that of the original inventors. Many true thoughts that were uttered centuries ago have developed into new thoughts for the reason that the truth which they expressed has become a part of a larger and more universal truth. Six hundred years before the birth of Christ, a Chinese sage observed: "The good I meet with goodness; the bad I also meet with goodness: that is virtue's goodness." Several centuries later, a higher intelligence taught: "Ye have heard that it was said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil." Today, a still broader intelligence explains, with the aid of a more thorough knowledge of the nature of the universe, why it is not man's place to condemn his brother's soul, or to punish him for possessing the nature which is his.

We have endeavored to furnish the reader with a mere glimpse of what lies beneath the aggressive and selfish spirit of nations that share the shelter of the globe. Their aggressive and selfish spirit is

all that we can perceive when we stop at appearances, and when we think of man as actor, creator and destroyer. But the Me of man is not a detached entity in this universe, nor does it act independently on the stage of life. Unbreakable bonds link it with the past, the present and the future. "Yesterday this day's madness did prepare." The past propels the human soul, the present moulds it, and the future calls it. The thoughts that we think today owe their existence to a chain of thoughts that directly links our mind with the beginnings of intelligence. The nature of our present activities is founded, ultimately, on that of the activities of the first man. Our soul is an age-long history of experiences, our mind a record of the things a million men have thought.

The purpose, if there be any, of strife among nations is human development. And if we cannot see purpose behind the fussy and mad behavior of mankind, we must at least observe that its ultimate result is not destruction but creation. Were it possible for us to realize that nations and individuals are not themselves actors, but instruments of action, we should be able to witness creation arise from the ashes of destruction. The creation in question does not, as already observed, refer to things material, but most emphatically to the mind and the soul of man. It is a bloody French revolution, horrible when contemplated by itself, that not only destroyed the corrupted soul of France, but also gave birth to a new and bigger France. The apparent contradiction of life and death in the words, "Le roi est mort, vive le roi!" with which the French people greeted the successor to the throne, is encountered throughout the universe. Death means life, destruction implies creation, loss involves gain. The truth of this statement comes home to us as we reflect upon our individual existence as a member of the community. In our private life the light of regeneration succeeds the darkness of a spiritual hell, we gain in soul and in intelligence as a compensation for our individually conceived losses, and every day we die and are reborn in a moral and in an intellectual sense. It is experience that both destroys and creates—experience which can be ours only as a result of our contact with the external world. The external world in the present case is society.

Most men elbow their way through the crowds on the highway of life, intent upon accomplishing their purpose and upon reaching their aim, taking it for granted that their individual aims and purposes are all that matter in the universe. The jostling crowd, the creatures that obstruct their progress, the souls that beg them to

reconsider and to travel in a different direction, are obstacles that must be eliminated, are enemies that must be vanquished. Little do these men dream that the jostling, hither and thither moving crowd is an organized whole, a living, spiritual machine that distributes experience and its resulting instruction to its members in accordance with their needs. That the crowd jostles, that fellow beings obstruct their progress, is due, in their opinion, to wickedness, perverseness, and what not. Their analysis of the matter ceases with the individual that antagonizes or opposes. The question, Why does the individual oppose? is seldom asked. A conscientious answer to that question should reveal his opponent as a being that acts in a particular manner because he is what he is. And that his aims, purposes and activities oppose their own is due to the fact that his being differs from theirs.

It is impossible to acquire a clear conception of the manner in which the community influences and develops the individual unless we accept differentiation as the basis of our thought. Nor can we without such a basis, account for the widely differing notions about the mystery of existence to which men have clung in the past, and to which they are clinging at present. If we merely think of men as human beings, beings that are fundamentally alike, the thoughts and actions of theirs that do not meet with our approval seem to proceed from their unwillingness to do and to think the right thing. The danger looms of our being prepared to condemn them to eternal hell-fire, and of condemning to Hades our own condemning soul. But a study of history should convince us of the absurdity of holding men absolutely responsible for the nature of their thoughts. The deeper we penetrate into the past, the more willing we are to concede that man could not very well help entertaining his extraordinary notions about things in general. Approaching the present, however, we become less generous, if not altogether harsh, in our criticism of thought and morale. It appears that our feelings remain unhurt when we contemplate human immaturity and stupidity from the distance of ages. We are incapable, however, of tolerating them in our present surroundings. This incomprehensible attitude of ours may be due to an excessive love of self which unconsciously desires that our own particular thoughts and ideas shall pervade the human world. But it also results, to a large extent, from our blindness to the fact that comparative immaturity and stupidity are part and parcel of our community. The past, as concerns moral and intelligence, is with us. Almost the complete his-

tory of human development is represented by the beings that today constitute the human race.

All men are different, and the difference in question originates in the inner being and in the intelligence. The degree of maturity of the inner man, and the degree of intelligence which is reflected by the inner being, are determined by the number and the variety of experiences that are both inherited from the past and acquired in this present life. When the external world—ultimately speaking, the universe—succeeds in drawing man's attention to its presence, there is question of individual experience. By what particular method the external world gains admission into the inner being, we have already explained in our chapter on Individual Development. There remains to be added that no man hears the voice of immensity unless his soul be equipped to hear it. The individual experiences in a way that conforms with his nature. Similar external conditions affect two different individuals in a different manner. What constitutes a calamity for one person may leave another unaffected. One man's cause of discouragement is another's source of inspiration. In a sense, the individual chooses only such experiences as are able to affect his being. But in all instances experience adds to man's universe-consciousness, while it destroys a little of his self-centeredness. Eventually, it must lead to complete universe-consciousness, to an awareness of All That Is, and to the utter elimination of the self.

The fact that present humanity consists of individuals each of which differs slightly from the other is one which we are slow to accept. This state of more or less complete differentiation is of a comparatively recent date. When human history began, men dwelt on fairly even levels of development which were represented by the various races that inhabited the earth. But the races developed into sub-races, the latter into nations, and within the nations classes of individuals proceeded to differentiate. The process of differentiation does not merely take place in the human world, but in almost every department of nature. Thinkers have observed that the developing universe proceeds from the homogeneous towards the heterogeneous, from one-ness towards many-ness. The solar system in its infancy is a gaseous mass, in its maturer stages an organized whole consisting of a central sun, of planets, satellites, meteors and comets. Whether we study the youthful stages of a solar system, or those of a humanity, or those of a continent, in each instance we meet with simplicity or oneness of the whole. All origin and immaturity

in the universe approach homogeneity, all destiny and maturity are visible in a complete differentiation of the whole.

Now, our incorrigible habit of judging the human world capable of thinking and acting in conformity with a certain fixed standard of thought and action results, in the first place, from our ignoring the fact that men are not, and never were, alike; and, in the second place, from our misconception of the manner in which the human race evolves. We incline to the notion that the individuals composing humanity progress uniformly like the points of a widening circle. We have marked the past with milestones that represent important stages in man's career of development. A flash of superior development here, an outburst of art there, a great invention elsewhere, prompt us to observe that a certain people, or that humanity, had achieved certain successes in the way of intelligence, art, or invention. Thus we remark that the Hebrews were monotheists, which they were—with a ninety-five per cent exception. The Greeks were philosophers and artists, with the exception of the large majority that consisted of superstitious barbarians. Today, nations endeavor to prove their claim to intellectual superiority by citing the names of certain of their sons, most of whom lived centuries ago, that won a place in the hall of fame. The German people are proud of having produced Goethe, Beethoven and Bach. The English nation measures its cultural heights with the Shakespearean yardstick. Not unfrequently, the American nation, sans Shakespeare and sans Goethe, sans Beethoven and sans Bach, in the estimation of moss-covered Europe, is a farflung community of money-making and dollar-hoarding individuals. Apart from the possibility that a Whitman and an Emerson look a little too deeply into the future to be adequately appreciated by the average citizen of the world, the fact remains that the above method of estimating a nation's intellectual or artistic worth by its production of a few illustrious men, is to the highest degree erroneous, if not absurd. If the German nation is dwelling on a lofty cultural eminence because Beethoven composed his *Moonlight Sonata,* and Goethe his *Faust,* then it may with equal justice be claimed that the Jews of twenty centuries ago were possessed of the Christ-spirit because Jesus dwelt in their midst. But Jesus, the Christ, pinnacle-like, loomed high above the swamp-level of average humanity, most of his thoughts and conceptions hidden from view by the ethereal mist of the too-sublime. In a comparative sense, the same may be observed about the intellectual and artistic genii of Europe. They,

too, represented the few that expressed ideals unattainable for the masses unto this day. We are but hinting at the truth when we observe that the first rumble of the Big Berthas forever destroyed the sublime strains of "Liebesträume" that once supposedly represented a nation's soul.

Nations possess average degrees of development that lie somewhere between the lowest and the highest degree found among their citizens. Between these two extremes are found innumerable shades of difference that are often hardly discernible, but that assert themselves in the individual's activities, morals or thoughts. The main difference between the modern and the ancient community is this: in the former the scale of individual development is finely graded, in the latter—a certain average development belongs to the masses and a conspicuously superior development is owned by a few individuals. Evolution, in the course of time, filled these wide gaps between immaturity and comparative maturity with countless intermediate stages of development. Moses, Plato, Marcus Aurelius, Galileo, and Newton are solitary figures in history, their intelligence soaring high above the average. And as we read about these men, we unconsciously raise the level of intelligence of their contemporaries, of the masses, to their own. But that task was reserved for evolution. Superior intelligence in history made a preliminary survey of the road which all individuals eventually must travel. In the course of time, we find the travelers that originally proceeded in groups and masses scattered along the road surveyed. We have in mind the solitary and utterly lonely figure of Jesus who surveyed the soul's pathway far beyond the vision and the comprehension of his contemporaries, far beyond our present understanding, perhaps. But the first section of the road is beginning to be filled with travelers that see the light in accordance with the progress that they have made. The great men of the past represent ideals, ideals of intelligence and morals, which for centuries continue to draw the groping children of humanity into higher regions of human development.

Humanity, then, does not progress uniformly. Like the main current of a wide stream, the core of humanity travels ahead of the rest, lighting the way with its superior development. The core contains what many are pleased to name the supermen, men that differ from other human beings in degree of universe-consciousness and intelligence, only. And along the banks of the stream of life the lingering eddies splash their human drops that evaporate into

oblivion. The drops represent immaturity which henceforth belongs to the past, and which has ceased to be of useful purpose in the great scheme of human life. Progressing humanity, therefore, continually replaces the temporary lowest and the temporary highest degree of development by two new extremes that raise the average development of the whole.

Now, the thing that develops the individual is compulsory association with fellow beings. In ancient times it was the compulsory intercourse with nature. When men began to organize into families, tribes and nations, when they chose to jointly face the struggle of life, the experiences involved in that mode of living supplanted those that were formerly furnished by the individual's nature-surroundings. The forest with its danger of beast and reptile made way for the city with its human opponents and enemies. The battle with nature's forces became the struggle for existence in the modern sense. All the hardships of the former nature-life changed into those of the social life, and continued to sharpen the individual's wit and to arouse him from his self-centeredness.

Life is a school in which all individuals are compelled to learn their lessons. For some foolish reason we object to the compulsory nature of our instruction. For another, unaccountable reason, we are blind to the fact that there are several grades in which individuals are instructed in accordance with their natural capacity for learning. If we could conceive of society as of a great teacher, and if we could perceive the many different lessons which many different individuals are required to master, the drudgery and the callousness of life should completely disappear. Instead, we should behold a divinely conceived instrument that very gradually raises man from eternal darkness into eternal light. As to the compulsory nature of individual instruction, our inability to see the true relationship between the member of the community and the whole prevents us from perceiving the necessity of such compulsion. And, yet, the relationship in question is a very simple one. In order to become aware of its simplicity, we have but to realize that the individual is a constituent part of the whole, and that his voice loses itself in the chorus of voices of the community. The whole has impersonal interests and aims, and is impersonally active. It does not progress in a direction that expresses A's desire, nor in one that reflects B's ambition, but in a direction that lies between those indicated by A and B. In other words, A deflects B from his original course, and vice versa.

Although our fellow beings thus apparently oppose our aims, and sometimes intentionally and maliciously obstruct our progress, they are merely instrumental in doing so. The actual seat of opposition must be found in the community, itself. And when we realize, in last analysis, that the individual is part of the community, we should finally locate it both in the individual and in society. Society is the modern external world which gradually supplanted the ancient natural one. Evolution uses it as an instrument, even as she formerly employed nature, for the purpose of developing man. Whereas the natural external world, however, merely taught man the alphabet of intelligence, social surroundings instruct him in the art of weaving intricate compositions on the mystery of existence.

Evolution's game, as we have stated before, is played by two interested parties, viz, by the thing or the creature that evolves, and by the instrument of evolution. It cannot truthfully be stated that society shapes the individual and that it maps out his career in life. The individual, being what he is, has a voice in the matter. His particular nature determines whether or not certain external conditions shall constitute experience for him. It, furthermore, determines how and to what extent society shall influence it. The compulsory nature of the individual's instruction does not, therefore, originate in his surroundings, only, but also in his inner being. The self, alone, does not constitute fate. Nor should fate be sought in the external world, only. But the self and the world of not-self which acts upon the self, together shape individual destiny. This last statement is not altogether to the liking of many people. Man is naturally averse to compulsion of any kind. It is freedom that he demands, freedom of action, freedom of thought, freedom to wander about in his labyrinthal universe. Especially of late, as a reaction perhaps against a more or less mechanistic conception of the universe, the philosophy of freedom is being pushed into the foreground. One of the popular arguments in favor of free will is, that without it life would lose its moral nature and purpose. But this associating free will with moral, and compulsion with not-moral or immorality, does not destroy the facts of nature. We suspect that also in this instance the wish is father of the thought, and that the conception of life is made to agree with a preconceived idea. In our deepest heart we possibly realize that there is no such thing as freedom. We are free, yes, in the sense that we are not slaves, that we are not subject to the domineering power of the tyrant. But who can conscientiously link a scheming infinite with tyranny, and

who can associate our child-like notions about moral with the activities of immensity?

Like children, we see freedom in action, in movement. We neglect to inquire about the forces that cause a thing to act or to move in a certain manner. If free will determines our activities in the universe, what then causes us to be active in one manner, and not in another? Why do we act nobly or ignobly? Because we are good or wicked, wise or ignorant, humble or perverse? Then here is limitation, fate, compulsion! And if the answer is, circumstances, or surroundings, or environment, then limitation, fate and compulsion lie there, in the external world of not-self. From whatsoever angle we view the matter, we cannot escape the conclusion that we are not independent actors on the stage of life. A mysterious something propels us which is both within and without, a something which intangibly pervades immensity, and which constitutes the sum total of all that is.

Individuality and compulsion are inseparably associated. It is in vain that we search the universe for absolute freedom. The planet of the solar system, the electron of the atomic system, are held in check, and their movements are guided, by forces residing in the external world. That the forces in question are capable of guiding and of holding in check, also results from the nature of the planet and from that of the electron. The entire universe of stars, meteors, comets and nebulae is a huge interplay of checking, guiding and directing forces—we may add, fortunately enough. The bird of proverbial freedom is a prisoner of nature, dependent on her bounty and subject to her moods. The atom darts along a path which is prescribed by external influences and by its own inherent qualities. And the external world causes the human individual to experience, to act and to think in conformity with the nature of his being. In passing, it may be observed that those people, in particular, who sincerely cling to the belief in an omniscient, all-ruling deity, are the first to sponsor the contradictory conception of individual free will. They do not realize, of course, that the conception in question denies the omnipotence and the all-rule of the supreme. Nor do they fully grasp the meaning of the following words: "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." And the statement, "The hairs on thy head are numbered," is reduced to little more than interesting reading matter by the notion of free will. These conflicting notions arise from an inability to link things,

beings and events with the rest of all that is, as a result of which the separately contemplated object reflects the shadow of evil.

The fact that the members composing society differ in constitution, physically, mentally and spiritually, makes possible the compulsion which the community exerts upon the individual. If society consisted of men that were absolutely alike, all thoughts, actions, activities and aims would be identical. Peace would reign supreme —the peace of death. There could be no question of individual experience. For experience is possible only then when the self comes in touch with a world the nature of which differs from that of the self. Each individual reflects the nature of his inner self in his activities, his thoughts, and his actions. What a man does and thinks expresses what he is. It is said, "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." But the reverse of that statement is more nearly true. As a man is, so does he think, act, and express himself in general. It is the different activities, thoughts and actions of individuals who live in close association that involve opposition, antagonism and struggle. These, in turn, constitute experience which develop the inner being and the intelligence. Ultimately speaking, therefore, we are unjust in our condemnation of humanity because it does not progress in an altogether peaceable manner. The individual does not consciously oppose his fellow. He opposes him because he is what he is, and because his fellow is different from what he is. All individual existence is a struggle, a strife, a war. The heterogeneous nature of the universe is responsible for the fact.

The great spiritual machine: the community! Society, man's teacher par excellence! We are in the habit of placing ourselves outside of it, as if we did not belong to it, as if we were not part and parcel of it. We hurl our criticism at it, worry about its present and future condition, agitate in favor of reforming it, rebel against its relentlessness. Wasted energy, all this! The thing is perfect. But it is a thing nature-made, not man-made. Man is the instrument, nature is the creator. Criticism of society and its members is an easy enough matter when we hold the individual responsible for what he is. Here is the picture that we criticize: A number of human beings placed upon this planet; they enter into an association; and they make a muddle of organized life. But the same force that called human beings from the deep of the world, and that placed them upon this earth, also bade them organize and build their society. And it is for that reason that society remains

deaf to the shouts and the lamentations, to the condemnations and the criticism of man. She continues to proceed in a natural manner, to blossom out in accordance with all the laws of natural growth. And not until we shall realize that man is instrumental instead of original, we must continue to run madly hither and thither, to pull our hair in frantic despair, and to complain to high heaven concerning the rottenness of our social structure.

Most of the proposed schemes for the improvement of the conditions of society are built on a shaky foundation. Their foundation is sought in the expressions of society rather than in its constitution. We consider the conditions of labor, or those of capital, but we seldom consider the inner condition of the laborer or of the capitalist. If the face of society is wrinkled and haggard looking, a dash of paint may temporarily improve appearances. The unhealthy condition remains, however, and only a fool is deceived by an artificial appearance of health. It is not in society's diseased countenance but rather in its constitution that we should find the cause of its ailments. By society's constitution we should mean something final and ultimate. When we say that laborers, doctors, lawyers, preachers and kings compose society, we refer to expressions, and not to fundamentals. The manner in which a man is active in the community roughly expresses what he is. At bottom, society is an organization of human inner beings that express themselves in accordance with their respective degrees of development.

An important question is this: How well, or how badly, does a scale of development fit into society? Each member of the community is active in behalf of the whole of which he is a part. No matter how deeply interested he may be in his personal affairs, his activities are nevertheless instrumental in determining the condition of the whole. But he not only contributes his share towards making the whole what it is, he is also compelled to respond to certain demands that emanate from it. The family, the smallest community in existence, establishes certain boundaries within which the member may move. Certain restrictions are placed upon the latter, and certain things are required from him. The interest of the family is his own, and he cannot, logically, object to the restrictions and the demands in question. The individual's voice is never heard singly, nor is his individuality considered separately. There exists a voice of the community in which the member's voice can be but partly heard.

That the member is unable to fully assert his individuality is due to the fact that society is a heterogeneous whole. We are in the habit of endowing men with the same inherent capacities and possibilities. We imagine that all men suffer, enjoy, experience and evolve in the same manner. But human beings are fundamentally not alike. Differences that appear on the surface should be linked with differences that touch the inner being. We should not expect a single religion to suffice for an entire humanity. Not all people are capable of living according to a single code of morals. Not all men are potentially able or intellectual. Let us remember that our observations of man concern reflections. His actions and his activities reveal the nature of his Me. They constitute the odor of his self, and belong to it as perfume belongs to the flower. They are the natural and the necessary expressions of that which he is. That which he is causes him to act in a certain manner, reveals certain capacities and abilities, makes him become laborer or president, criminal or saint. What, really, is an individual? He is a product of evolution—a fine, a bad, or a mediocre product, according to our viewpoint. The degree of development which he represents, which was determined before birth, clears him of the responsibility for the nature of his being and for its necessary expressions. That a man is not responsible for the qualities of his soul and of his gray matter, simple as the fact may be, seems to be an indigestible one for many people. "Why does he fail to do this or that?" they ask. Or, "Why does he not educate himself?" Foolish questions, these! And equally foolish are the answers found to them. Why does not the fish fly? Why does not the rose grow below the surface of the soil? A man does what he does, because he is what he is.

These simple facts make our efforts to cure the ills of society appear vain. Society heals herself: from within. External applications merely make her look unnatural, ridiculous. We should learn to leave nature alone, to let evolution continue in peace. A great deal of unnecessary noise would then cease to disturb the eternal quiet of an infinite universe. Our foolish notion of dispensing with nature, and of having a fling at man-fashioning ourselves, brings little or no results. We preach and exhort, lecture from platform and soapbarrel, found Leagues of Nations and call disarmament conferences, inaugurate a movement here and found a society there. But, in the most annoying of manners, humanity continues its lazy progress, insensible to the fussy activities of well-meaning

souls who would make it cover a distance of a thousand years in the flash of a moment.

The ills of society continue to annoy us as long as we consider merely our own interests, and as long as we fail to associate our private difficulties with a universal scheme of progress. There probably is not an individual living who has not, at times, denounced the barrier which society occasionally erects, apparently to block his progress. Consideration of the self and the barrier, only, turns the compulsion experienced into a hard and bitter one. Yet is it comparatively easy to accustom ourselves to the idea of compulsion when we consider that its nature is impersonal? It is not, indeed, our fellow man who forces us into our particular station in life. Nor is there question of one class of men driving another, let us say, to labor. Society, at its present stage of development, demands the performance of labor. And certain of its members, to the exclusion of others, are peculiarly fit to supply the demand. This response to an impersonal demand lifts any activity in society above the level of inferiority on which we may be tempted to place it. Considered from the community's standpoint, there cannot be question of either superiority or inferiority. Each member contributes his share towards making society what it is, and the nature of his contribution is determined by the nature of his being. Eliminate the streetsweeper, and the community loses something of its near-perfection. The same thing would result in case the manufacturer were eliminated.

These reflections lead us to the consideration of liberty and equality. Man's conception of liberty and equality are sometimes dangerously utopian. Whenever he tries their practical application, he shakes the very foundations of society. There follow blood and thunder, lawlessness and disorganization. A leader generally arises and, with him, iron rule. When the heat of passion has cooled and the thunder of revolution has subsided, there is an unuttered realization that the healthy community is founded on something of which the violent reformer of society had not thought. The violent reformer's intellectual analysis of the social structure ignores society as a whole and considers merely individual problems. He commits the blunder which the average man is inclined to commit in the mental process of society building. He employs a single kind of building material, say, bricks, laboring under the delusion that he can very well dispense with steel, plaster, cement, lumber, in short, with such materials as are necessary for the completion of the solid

structure. His society turns out to be a tottering group of individuals of a certain kind who vainly and madly hunt for something, they know not what, that will solidly cement them together. The rest of the original community is inactive, and bereft of the opportunity to be useful in behalf of the whole. Then follow the guillotine and the machine gun.

The truth is that liberty for many people is identical with the total absence of compulsory and restricting influences. But such a condition, as we have endeavored to explain before, is impossible. Restriction and compulsion originate both with the individual, himself, and with the external world. They are inseparably associated with the universal fact of differentiation. In society, differentiation looms up as inequality, an inequality which, indeed, has nothing to do with social position or with worldly possessions, but with the condition of development of the inner being. Men are born free and equal in a very limited sense. In reality they are born servants to the great spirit of the universe, and they are instrumental in furthering its schemes. To that fact, there can be no moral objection. There can be no moral objection to the father curbing his individuality for the sake of the family of which he is an integral part. There can be no moral objection to the citizen's suppression of self for the sake of the state of which he is a constitutive member. And, finally, there is no moral objection to the individual's obeying the laws of a supreme power in which he "lives, moves and has his being."

As concerns inequality, the following picture perhaps illustrates it. Two tiny creatures lie crying in their respective cradles, the one a potential genius, the other a potential dull-head. Entering into life from behind the veil of birth, they carry with them their respective inheritance of the ages. And even if they should henceforth travel hand in hand, meeting with the same external conditions, the life of the one must of necessity be totally different from that of the other. The same universe leaves two entirely different impressions in two dissimilar souls. It arouses inspiration in the one, leaving the other unmoved. A single external world of circumstance and surroundings creates two different inner worlds of experience and thought. Fate, for each of the two individuals, is not without, nor is it within, but it is both without and within. The meeting of the fatal self and the fatal external world shapes immediate individual destiny.

Society, at any given moment, is what it should be. It is perfect in view of the nature of the material of which it is composed. True, one can conceive of a society that more closely approaches the ideal. But such an ideal condition cannot be established as a sort of superstructure on top of the existing one. The superstructure must gradually emerge from the inner existing building. A million different things, learn a million different lessons, and grow a thousand times more universe-conscious than they are at present. And it is these very things which society eventually accomplishes. No single individual, not even a Son of Man, can accomplish them. Sermons and lectures, books and universities, do no more than express what the individual already knows as a result of inner experience. It is experience which community life furnishes the individual. We may add that its method of distribution is founded on a basis of absolute justice. Our experiences are necessary for the immediate further development of the self. Judiciously, the self chooses from life's storehouse of experience the things that it needs. No man of a preponderantly physical nature ever suffers the tortures of a spiritual hell. Experience touches the individual where he is capable of feeling. Human development proceeds along the lines of individual sacrifice. And our willingness to sacrifice expresses the fact that we are losing in self-centeredness and gaining in universe-consciousness. Our surroundings, therefore, cannot educate and instruct us, unless they occasionally covet that which we have or desire. We find, as a consequence, that all members of society struggle and experience in accordance with the nature of their being. It is true that we are not always able to perceive suffering and struggle. But that is due to the fact that we lack imagination. It is a difficult matter for us to place ourselves in thought in the position of our neighbor. Our own position is overwhelmingly more important. Often, of course, it is absolutely impossible for us to see the struggles and the sufferings of our fellow man. His references to them cause us to smile. We reflect that he is foolish to "let such things bother him." Our lack of appreciation results from our living in an entirely different world, on account of our possessing an entirely different soul.

Modern life is the great teacher of man. Society is to the modern individual what nature was to ancient man. It constitutes the individual's external world, his storehouse of experience. Man experiences in accordance with the nature of his being. The individuals and the conditions that are instrumental in opposing or

thwarting his aims, oppose for no other reason than the one that he is the particular human being that he is. It is *his* aims that are opposed and thwarted, and his aims are stamped with the mark of his particular soul. Society threatens, renders difficult, or takes away. That is what nature used to do in the case of primeval man. The result, as we have seen, was that primeval man lit the darkness of his intelligence with a spark of reason. To think means to awaken from the nature-dream of self-centeredness in which all individual being originally is wrapped. To think and reason about a threatening external world constitutes the first step on the road that leads towards the discovery of an infinite universe. The ancient method, nature's method, of awakening man is still in force in modern society. The social life is but a thin veil that very inadequately hides scheming nature. Man is a product of nature, and his physical, social, moral and intellectual creations are her indirect products. Society, with its problems for the individual, continues to throw sparks of light into the semidarkness of half-matured intelligence. It continues to awaken the individual from his natural dream of self-centeredness, and to impress the act upon his mind that an immense world of not-self exists. The world of not-self holds mysteries which it is his divine task to unravel. The secret of being and the secret of God must be discovered by him in the world of not-self which, in turn, cannot exist for him unless he breaks the shell of self-centeredness within which he was born. He is assisted in breaking through the shell by his surroundings, by life, by the external world, by the very world of not-self which he is to discover. The prosaic business of living, though he is seldom aware of the fact, is the thing that urges him to discover the universe, and, subsequently perhaps, the spirit that moves it.

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